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THE WORKS OF

THÉOPHILE GAUTIER

IN TWENTY-FOUR VOLUMES

LIMITED EDITION

LIMITED, FOR SALE IN AMERICA, TO ONE THOUSAND NUMBERED AND REGISTERED SETS, OF WHICH THIS IS NUMBER 346

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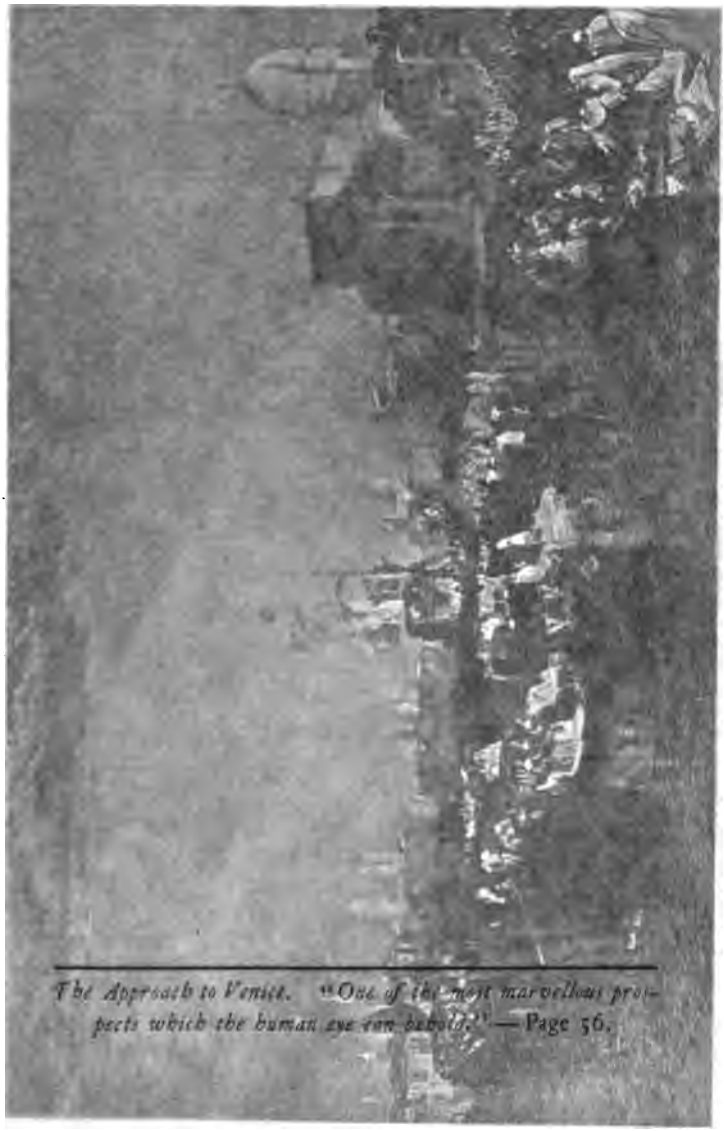

The Approach to Venice. "One of the most marvellous prospects which the human eye can behold." — Page 56.

THE WORKS OF

THÉOPHILE GAUTIER

VOLUME SEVEN

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TRAVELS IN ITALY

With an Introduction by the Editor

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Introduction

TRAVELS IN ITALY

Introduction

IF Spain, as stated in the *Introduction* to "Travels in Spain," always attracted the French mind, so did Italy. It did more — it attracted the Frenchman himself and induced him to travel. For one who visited the Iberian peninsula, a thousand crossed the Alps. Madrid, Granada, Seville were rivalled and surpassed by Naples, Rome, Florence, Venice, and Milan. There had always been intercommunication between the two countries; civilisation came to Gaul in the train of Cæsar's legions; the Renaissance flourished in the shadow of the Apennines before it swept over the valleys of the Seine and the Loire. Petrarch became a living force in French literature, and Leonardo da Vinci died the guest of Francis I at Amboise. In the days of the Valois it was an Italian woman who dominated blood-stained France, and in the last stand of the nobility against centralising monarchy

it was an Italian cardinal against whom fought the Condés and the Longuevilles. Of the many triumphs which the Sun-King enjoyed to the full, few were sweeter to him than the sight of the Doge of Venice bowing at the foot of the great throne in the splendid gallery at Versailles.

The Romanticists could not escape the fascination of Italy, and in certain respects they did not attempt to do so. Rome itself — which had so happily inspired Joachim du Bellay — did not attract them, for the City on the Seven Hills was too classical for them, and classicism was their *bête noire*; but Venice, with its unique situation, its wealth of legend, tradition, and history, with its Bridge of Sighs, its Leads, its Grand Canal, its Rialto, seemed to them to fulfil every condition required of a city worthy of the admiration and the fanatical worship of the poet and the painter. It is interesting to note that neither Naples nor Florence had the same charm for them; that they were scarcely affected by Pisa, Bologna, and Milan, while Ferrara and Padua did appeal to them in greater measure and with more certainty. The real gem of Italy for them, the typical city, was unquestionably Venice. Two of their gods had set the seal of their approval upon it: Shake-

speare had made it the scene of one of his masterpieces, and Byron had lived, loved, and sung there.

Thus Gautier, who, even in 1850, was still very much of a Romanticist, felt himself strongly drawn to the land of the orange and the myrtle. The painter and the poet in him longed to behold the Venice of his dreams, the Venice which had inspired Musset — whose verse no man forgets, once he has read it. He could have dispensed with all else if only he saw the City on the Lagoons, and when he did finally cross the Alps it was with feverish impatience that he hurried on. Neither Como nor Garda, neither Milan nor Verona could hold him — on the distant horizon, above the blue line of the Adriatic, shone the splendour, the mirage, the place of his dreams, the Jerusalem of his artistic soul. And once he reached it he could not tear himself away; he lingered in it; he was never weary of wandering in and out of its streets, of being swept along its canals, of passing from palace to church, from church to square, from square to island. He was fully, deeply satisfied. He enjoyed the exquisite bliss of the complete realisation of a rich and varied fancy, so surpassingly fair that he had dreaded seeing it vanish, that he had trembled at the possibility of its proving

untrue. But it did not. Venice was all and more than he had looked for; he basked in his satisfaction; he revelled in his joy; he exulted in his pleasure with the same complete, profound sense of triumph as Kingsley when he, also, realised a long caressed dream and "At last!" found himself in the West Indies.

This fact told on Gautier's book, or on his articles, rather; for the "Travels in Italy" are letters of travel collected and republished in book form, like all his other works of this class. He was on the staff of *la Presse* when he started on his trip, and it was to that paper that he sent his "copy," the first instalment of which appeared on September 24, 1850. Very quickly he took his readers to Venice — his letter of October 3 being devoted to that city. At this time he carried his story no farther than the description of the Grand Canal, and there occurred a break of nearly a year in the publication of the letters. They were resumed on September 12, 1851, in the same journal, but under a somewhat modified title. The first one was: "Far from Paris — Notes of Travel;" the second one, "Far from Paris — Life in Venice;" the original one reappearing only in January, 1853, when the chapter on Florence was published in *le Pays*. That chapter ends

abruptly, before Gautier has fairly entered upon the study of the city, its monuments, and its art treasures. As for Rome and Naples, there is not a word about them. Venice swamped the rest of Italy, not only because, as he tells us, he had spent a much longer time there than he had planned to do, but because when he began to write of this city of his dreams he could not stay his pen; the theme was congenial and the words came of themselves; one scene called up another, one picture reminded him of another masterpiece not yet seen — and on, on he went, forgetful of all else in that fair land save of the fact that he was in Venice, that Venice was lovely, that he adored it, and that he must make every one of his readers adore it too.

It should be added that Gautier, who quite recognised the fact that he had not done justice to Florence, and had not written a line about Rome, intended to continue his book until he had treated these two cities and Naples in the same way as Venice; but, alas! the project was never carried out, no more than many another which he caressed for a time, and when in 1875 the "Travels in Italy" appeared in book form with the sub-title "Italia," that was the end of the attempt to complete the story of the trip.

Of course it would have been interesting to possess all Gautier had to say about the Eternal City and the City of Flowers, but it may be affirmed that it would not have been as characteristic, as deeply marked with intense feeling, with warm, passionate love of the subject. To him Italy meant Venice, and Venice Italy. The other places were no doubt interesting and attractive, and the painter-half of him could delight in the *Tribuna* and the *Loggie*, but the whole of him was wrapped up in San Marco and the Campanile, in San Giorgio Maggiore and the Dogana, in the Lido and the Grand Canal. He had given his readers the very cream of Italy at the outset; neither he nor they could care for aught else after that.

Yet more. He had been essentially Romanticist; he had carried out the ideas of the school and laid stress on the very points which constituted, for Hugo and his followers, the chief value of the new art, now, alas! no longer new and already being replaced by a truer and more satisfactory form. Picturesqueness, colour, exoticism, quaintness, eccentricity, grotesqueness, splendour, abundance of poetical epithets, wealth of imagination, gorgeousness of description, stateliness and variety of scene — these were called for by all Romanticists, and

these he gave in abundance. There might be — there was another Venice besides the exquisite city he saw, with its "pirate basilica," its gallery of palaces, its wondrous prospects, its squalid quarters — there was the Venice of history, the one Montesquieu and Saint Réal knew, the oligarchical republic so long the Mistress of the Seas; there was the Venice groaning under the yoke of the Austrian, that mourned while its masters feasted. Of this one he has given us a glimpse, but no more. Then the Venice of the Venetians themselves, with its own mode of life, its own peculiarities of thought, its own characteristic manners, — the actual living Venice; but that he speaks not of and thinks not of.

The reason for this is not far to seek. The whole Romanticist school laid the greatest stress on externals, and cared little or nothing for deep and minute analysis of feeling or passion. It was impulsive, not logical; emotional, not rational; passionate, but superficial. It was carried away by its feelings, by its nerves; it could not dwell long on any one subject; assiduous, persevering, laborious, minute study was repugnant to its character. It loved to flit from one picturesque subject to another. It craved for whatever was novel;

it revelled in the sensational. It was opposed to the psychology of the writers of the seventeenth century who saw in Man the one and only subject worthy of engrossing their attention; it was hostile to the scepticism of the eighteenth century, that scorned tradition and turned legend into ridicule. The Romanticist school had little thought for man; the environment, the background, the stage-setting were more important in its eyes. Accuracy in matters historical it flouted too readily; the important thing was that history should be attractive, brilliant, richly coloured, striking.

And it is much in this way that Gautier understood Venice. It is the splendid scene, the long line of palaces, the flowing waters of the canals, the lofty campaniles bathed in rosy light, the glistering mosaics, the picturesque attitudes of the gondoliers that he reproduces with unrivalled skill. It is a magnificent background, a superb scene made ready for some great human drama, and in this respect his description is unequalled and wholly satisfactory. He has done exactly what he started out to do. His programme is fulfilled to the letter, and his book is the work of an artist and a poet that sees marvellously well, and makes his reader

see with him. Victor Hugo himself could not make the scenes more lifelike. The book is full of poetic feeling, of ardent love of beauty, of the deep sentiment of art. Bar a weak point here and there, there are few finer bits than the account of the arrival in Venice, — a "Rain, Steam and Speed" that recalls Turner; few more heartfelt and exquisite farewells than his adieu to Venice, which even Byron's "Adieu to thee, fair Rhine!" or Walter Scott's "Harp of the North, farewell!" do not surpass. There can, indeed, be no farewell to the Venice Gautier saw and which he makes his readers see. It is the poetic image, the idealised vision which for ever remains in the memory.

Travels in Italy

TRAVELS IN ITALY

ITALIA

LAGO MAGGIORE

AS soon as we had crossed the crest which separates Switzerland from Italy, I was struck by the extreme difference in the temperature. On the Swiss slope the weather had been delightful, — soft, balmy, and bright, — but on the Italian there blew an icy wind, and great, mist-like clouds swept constantly over us. The cold was the more bitter by contrast with the previous warmth. The rain accompanied us on our way until we reached Lago Maggiore. At early dawn the sky began to clear, though vast banks of black and dark-gray clouds from which still fell occasional showers, rose behind the mountains on the other side of the lake.

The road follows the shore past endless gardens and villas with white peristyles, roofs of curved tiles, and terraces covered with luxuriant vines upborne by granite supports. On the terraces, which frequently rise

one above another, and which are turned into carefully cultivated gardens, bloom all manner of flowers and shrubs. I noticed repeatedly and not without astonishment, for it was the first time that I had come across them, great clumps of gigantic blue hortensia.

The three Borromean Islands, Isola Madre, Isola Bella, and Isola dei Pescatori, are situated in the northern part of the lake, which forms a sort of an elbow, one end of which is turned towards Domo d' Ossola. Originally these islands were barren rocks. Prince Vitaliano Borromeo had loam brought there and built gardens of European reputation. I purposely use the word "built," for masonry plays a great part in them, as it does indeed in nearly all Italian gardens, which are architectural works rather than gardens. Isola Madre consists, like Isola Bella, of a series of terraces rising one above another, and surmounted by a palace. Isola Bella, which is very plainly seen from the road, has a wealth of turrets, of slender spires, of statues, fountains, porticos, colonnades, vases, and of the richest architectural decoration. There are even trees, — cypresses, orange trees, myrtles, lime trees, Canada pines; but plainly vegetation is a mere accessory. The very natural idea of putting verdure, flowers, and

sward into a garden was an after-thought, like all natural ideas. Some distance farther the arcaded houses of Isola dei Pescatori show their bases laved by the waters of the lake; their rustic aspect contrasting pleasantly with the somewhat pretentious pomp of Isola Madre and Isola Bella.

The islands, seen from the shore, do not justify the enthusiastic descriptions which have been written of them. The seven terraces of Isola Bella, ending in unicorns and Pegasi, have a theatrical aspect which scarcely fits in with the Borromean motto, "*Humilitas*," inscribed everywhere. Isola Madre, with its square terraces supporting a square mansion, is symmetrical and dull, and one cannot but wonder that these two islands should have been celebrated so enthusiastically. Both the lake and the road are very full of life. On the lake are fishing-boats, ferry-boats and pyroscaphs which ply between Sesto Calende and Bellinzona; on the road ox-carts, carriages, and foot-passengers carrying the inevitable umbrella. The peasant women, sometimes pretty, are afflicted with goitre like the Valaisian women.

On approaching Arona, a colossal statue of Saint Carlo Borromeo which overlooks the lake, is seen on

a hill to the right. It is, next to the Colossus of Rhodes and the Colossus of Nero at the Maison Dorée, the loftiest statue ever made. The saint, in an attitude full of nobility and simplicity, holds a book in one hand and with the other appears to bestow his blessing on the land he protects and which lies outstretched at his feet.

Arona has a thoroughly Spanish look. The houses have projecting roofs and balconies, the lower windows are grated, and on the walls are painted panels and madonnas. At the inn we came upon an inner court adorned with pillars and galleries just as in Andalusia.

The lake ends at Sesto Calende, where the Ticino issues from Lago Maggiore. Sesto Calende is on the farther bank and the stream is crossed by a ferry, for the Milan road passes through that little town. I rather liked Sesto Calende. It was market day, a piece of luck for a traveller, for market day brings from the country districts numbers of typical peasants whom otherwise it would be very difficult to come across. Most of the women wore a striking and very effective head-dress. Their hair, plaited and rolled carefully at the back of the head, was held in place by thirty or forty silver pins arranged in the form of an aureole,

that showed above the head like the dentellations of a comb; a larger pin adorned at each end with enormous metal olives passed through the chignon; the whole recalling the head-dress of the Valencian women. These pins, called *spontoni*, are rather costly, and yet I have seen them worn by poor women and young girls with frayed skirts and bare and dusty feet. No doubt they sacrificed to this piece of luxury other objects of prime necessity, — but is not the prime necessity for women to be beautiful, and are not silver pins preferable to shoes?

The Austrian dominions begin at Sesto Calende; the other shore of the lake is Piedmontese. It is at Sesto Calende that for the first time one comes upon the tight-fitting blue trousers and the white tunics of the Austrians.

I must not leave Sesto Calende without sketching the portrait of a young woman upon the threshold of a shop, the dark interior of which formed a warm, strong background, against which she stood out like a head by Giorgione. Her beauty was of the purest Southern type. Her black eyes shone like coals under her amber brow; her complexion was of that uniform tone, that *faccia smorta* which is in no wise sickly,

and which merely indicates that passion concentrates all the blood in the heart; her thick, close, shining hair, curling in short waves, swelled on her temples as if the wind had blown it out, and her neck and shoulders formed a clean and splendid line. She let me look at her quietly, without self-consciousness or coquetry, guessing that I was either a painter or a poet, perhaps both, and kindly let me enjoy one aspect of her beauty.

The Austrian postilions wear a picturesque costume, consisting of a green jacket with yellow and black aiguillettes, jack-boots, a hat with a copper band, and on the hip the horn which recurs so often in Schubert's melodies. It is notable that in every country the postilion who drives civilisation by post, since civilisation and travelling are synonymous, is one of those who longest remain faithful to local colour. He is the Past driving the Future and cracking his whip.

From Sesto Calende to Milan the road is bordered with vineyards and groves of trees, which grow most luxuriantly and vigorously. The foliage bounds the view on all hands, and you travel between two lines of verdure kept fresh by running brooks. A splendid avenue of trees indicates the approach to the city,

which has a very majestic appearance from this side. The Triumphal Arch, under which could easily be placed the Carrousel Arch and which almost rivals in size the Arc de l'Étoile, gives to the entrance a monumental character borne out by the other buildings. On the summit of the arch an allegorical figure of Peace drives a bronze car drawn by six horses. At the four angles of the entablature are equerries mounted on prancing brazen steeds and holding wreaths. Two colossal figures of river-gods leaning upon urns are placed against the huge panel on which is inscribed the votive inscription; and four pairs of Corinthian columns mark the divisions of the monument, separate the cornice, and form three distinct arcades. The central one is astonishingly high.

Having passed through this archway, one enters the Nuevo Parco, which appeared to me almost as large as the Champ de Mars in Paris. On the left rises a vast amphitheatre intended for manœuvres and open-air performances; at the back rises the old castle; and beyond, against the blue sky, stands out like silver filigree the white silhouette of the Duomo, which has in no wise the form of a dome. *Duomo* in Italy is a generic term and does not imply a cupola.

As soon as one enters the streets, the height of the buildings, the coming and going of the people, the general cleanliness and comfort make the tourist feel that he is in a living capital, — quite a rare thing in Italy, where there are so many dead cities. Numberless carriages travel rapidly along the flagged tracks, somewhat like stone rails, set in the pebbly pavement. The houses look like mansions, the mansions like hotels, the hotels like palaces, the palaces like temples. Everything is grand, regular, majestic, if somewhat pompous. On all sides are seen columns, architraves, and balconies of granite. Milan is somewhat like both Madrid and Versailles, with a spruceness which Madrid lacks. The resemblance to Spain which I have already spoken of strikes one at every step, and I cannot help noting it again, for I am not aware that it has been remarked upon previously. The windows are hung with great white and yellow striped blinds, the shops have curtains of the same colour, which recall the Spanish *tendidos;* the women of the middle class and those who are not in full dress, wear the *mezzaro*, a sort of black veil which imitates the mantilla very closely. The illusion would be almost complete, were it not destroyed by the presence of the Austrians.

LAGO MAGGIORE

I had been told to go to the best hotel in Milan, the Hôtel de la Ville, in the Corso Servi (now Corso Vittorio Emanuele), which fully deserves its reputation. The façade is a very good piece of architecture, adorned with pilasters, brackets, and busts of celebrated Italians, orators, painters, poets, historians, and warriors. The staircase, worthy of a royal residence, is covered from top to bottom with remarkable stucco work and paintings of incredible richness and amazing workmanship. The ceiling is particularly remarkable. It represents various mythological subjects, with monochromes, *bassi-relievi*, pilasters, and flowers so brilliant and so admirably painted that Diaz would envy them. All the rooms are decorated with equal care and taste; the smallest hallways and corridors are splendid and interesting. As for the dining-room, the luxuriance of the ornamentation is overpowering. Eight colossal caryatides, alternately male and female, watch the traveller at his meals and intimidate him with their fixed stony glance. These caryatides support a ceiling divided into compartments of unimaginable richness. Everywhere festoons, carvings, pendentives, imitation gems and gilding more brilliant than reality can possibly be. This will suffice to give an idea of Milanese luxury.

It is so much the habit of travellers to speak ill of hotels and hotel-keepers that I here do this superb establishment the justice it deserves. I shall have enough descriptions of an entirely different kind to contrast with this one.

TRAVELS IN ITALY

MILAN

THE Duomo naturally attracts every tourist in Milan at once; it dominates the city, of which it is the centre, the attraction, and the wonder. You proceed forthwith, even on a night when there is no moon, to note at least its general outline.

The Piazza del Duomo is somewhat irregular in form. Its houses with their massive pillars and their saffron-coloured awnings, composed of buildings erected irregularly and varying in height, set off the cathedral admirably. Buildings often lose more than they gain by being cleared of their surroundings. This has been proved in the case of several Gothic monuments which were not, as had been supposed, spoiled by the stalls and hovels which had gradually grown up beside them. Besides, the Duomo is entirely isolated. But I think that nothing is better for a palace, a church, or any other regular edifice than to be surrounded by incoherent structures which bring out its noble proportions.

The first effect produced upon the sight-seer who looks at the Duomo from the Square, is its dazzling appearance. The whiteness of the marble contrasting with the blue of the heavens is most striking; the church is like a vast lace of silver laid upon a background of lapis-lazuli. That is the first impression, and it is also the last; when I think of the Duomo at Milan, it appears to me thus.

The Duomo is one of the few Gothic churches in Italy, but the Gothic is very different from ours. It does not exhibit the simple faith; it has not the dread, mysterious, and darksome depth, the emaciated forms, the upspringing from earth to heaven, the austere character which sets aside beauty as too sensual, and uses matter only in so far as it enables it to rise towards God. The Italian Gothic is elegant, graceful, and brilliant, such as might be devised for fairy palaces and used for the construction of Alcazars and mosques just as well as for a Catholic temple. Its delicacy allied to its whiteness gives it the appearance of a glacier with its innumerable *aiguilles*, or of a gigantic concretion of stalactites. It is difficult to believe that it is the handiwork of man.

The façade is exceedingly simple. It consists of an acute angle like the gable of an ordinary house, bordered by marble lacework. The wall, which has no projecting portion or order of architecture, is pierced by five doors and eight windows, and divided by six groups of fluted columns, or rather, of ribs ending in hollowed points surmounted by statues, with the interstices filled by brackets and niches which support and shelter figures of angels, saints, and patriarchs. Behind these spring up, like the pillars of a basilica, a crowded forest of finials, pinnacles, and minarets, of *aiguilles* of white marble, and the central spire, which looks as if it had been crystallised in the air as it springs into the sky to a dizzying height, carrying close to the heavens the Virgin who stands upon its utmost point, one foot upon the crescent. On the centre of the façade are inscribed the words, "*Mariæ nascentæ*," which form the dedication of the cathedral.

Begun by Gian Galeazzo Visconti, and continued by Lodovico il Moro, the modern basilica was completed by Napoleon I. It is the largest church next to Saint Peter's at Rome and the Cathedral at Seville. The interior is majestic and noble in its simplicity. Rows of columns in pairs divide it into five naves.

These groups of columns, in spite of their real mass, appear light on account of the slender proportions of the shafts. Above their capitals rises a sort of open and richly sculptured gallery, in which are placed statues of saints; then the ribbing continues and meets at the summit of the vaulting, adorned with trefoils and Gothic interlacements painted with such wonderful perfection that the eye would be deceived if here and there the bare stone did not show through the broken plaster.

In the centre of the transept cross an opening surrounded by a railing enables one to look into the chapel in the crypt where rests Saint Carlo Borromeo within a crystal bier covered with silver plates. Saint Carlo Borromeo is the most venerated saint in this part of the country; his virtues and his behaviour at the time the plague raged in Milan made him popular and keep his memory green.

At the entrance of the choir, on a bay adorned by a crucifix surrounded by adoring angels, hangs the following inscription in a wooden frame: "*Attendite ad petram unde excisi estis.*"

On either side rise two magnificent pulpits of metal, supported by superb bronze figures and overlaid with

silver *bassi-relievi*, the workmanship of which is more valuable than the material even. The panels of the organ, placed not very far from the pulpit, were painted by Procacini, if I am not mistaken, and around the choir run the stations of the Cross, carved by Andrea Biffi, and some other sculptures. The weeping angels who mark the stations have varied attitudes and are delightful, though somewhat effeminate. The general impression is of religious simplicity; a soft light induces recollection; the great pillars spring to the vaulting with a feeling of aspiring faith; no obtrusive detail destroys the majesty of the *ensemble*. The general plan of the building is grasped at a glance. The splendid elegance of the exterior seems to be veiled in mystery and to become more humble. The exterior is perhaps pagan in its lightness and whiteness, but the interior is unquestionably Christian.

The sacristy contains treasures which did not surprise me, for I had seen the wardrobe of Our Lady of Toledo, one single dress of which, covered with black and white pearls, is worth seven millions, but the sacristy at Milan, none the less, contains incredible riches. I shall first mention, because art must always take precedence of gold and silver, a fine "Flagellation of

Christ " by Cristoforo Solari, called il Gobbo, a Milanese painter, and a painting by Daniele Crespi representing a miracle of Saint Carlo Borromeo, a work of masterly power and great ferocity of inspiration; next, the silver busts of the bishops, of Saint Sebastian, and Saint Thekla, the patroness of the parish church, studded with rubies and topazes; a golden cross starred with sapphires, garnets, smoky topazes, and rock crystals; a magnificent eleventh-century copy of the Gospels, presented by Bishop Ribertus, written in gold throughout and bearing upon its covers, which are chased in the Byzantine style, a Christ wearing a skirt and accompanied by the four symbolical figures, the lion, the ox, the eagle, and the angel; a pail for holy water made of ivory and provided with silver-gilt handles in the shape of chimeras; a pyx by Benvenuto Cellini, which is a wonder of elegance and delicacy; the feather mitre of Saint Carlo Borromeo; and pictures in silk by Lodovico Pellegrini.

In the corner of one of the naves, before ascending to the roof, I glanced at a monument adorned with allegorical figures in bronze by Leone Leoni (Aretino) from the designs of Michael Angelo, in a superb, violent style. The roof itself, bristling with finials and

supported with flying buttresses which form corridors in perspective, is composed, like the rest of the building, of great slabs of marble. It rises far above the highest buildings in the city. A bas-relief, admirably carved, is set within each flying buttress. Each turret bears twenty-five statues. I do not believe that anywhere else are so many carved figures contained within a similar space; the statues of the Duomo, which number 6716, would people a town of fair size. I had read of the church in Morea, painted in the Byzantine style by the monks of Mount Athos, which contains no less than three thousand figures, large and small, but this is nothing by the side of the Duomo at Milan. Among the statues is one by Canova, a Saint Sebastian, and an Eve by Cristoforo Solari, charming in its sensual grace, which is somewhat surprising in such a place.

From the roof one has a noble prospect of the Alps, the Apennines, and the plains of Lombardy. In the distance are seen the white and black courses of the church at Monza, where is preserved the famous iron crown which Napoleon placed on his own head when he was crowned King of Italy, saying at the same time: "God has given it to me. Woe to him who

touches it!" The crown is of gold and precious stones like every other crown, and owes its name to a small iron band which encloses it, and which, it is claimed, is forged out of a nail of the true cross, so that it is at once a jewel and a relic. A special permit is needed to see it since it acquired additional value by being placed upon Napoleon's august brow, but an accurate copy is exhibited.

The ascent of the open-worked spire is in no wise perilous, although it is likely to alarm people subject to vertigo. The light stairs wind in the turrets and lead to a balcony above which there is only the pyramidion of the spire and the statue which crowns the building.

I shall not try to describe in greater detail this gigantic basilica; it would take a whole volume; I shall be satisfied, as a mere artist, with its general aspect and a surprising impression. On returning to the street and walking around the church, one notices on the lateral façades and on the apse the same multitude of statues and *bassi-relievi*. It is like a mad orgy of sculpture, an incredible heaping up of wonders.

Around the cathedral thrive all sorts of small trades, — second-hand book-stalls, open-air opticians, and even

a marionette show; human life with its triviality moves and swarms at the foot of the majestic edifice; there is always the same contrast between the sublime idea and the coarse fact; the temple of the Lord casts its shadow upon a Punchinello show.

THE LAST SUPPER — VERONA

THE next day my first visit was to Santa Maria delle Grazie, the beautiful church attributed to Bramante, built of brick which shows like a rosy flush through the plaster-work broken in many places, and gives to the building, although greatly out of repair, an appearance of life and youth. The side chapels are adorned with frescoes representing tortures. Over the door of one of these chapels are two bronze medallions representing the Virgin and Christ, most unctuous in expression and delicate in workmanship. The low vault, the marble overlaying, the facetted mirrors, the crystals which decorate them are quite in the Spanish taste, and I saw a chapel exactly like that in the Convent of Santa Monica at Cordova.

Leaving the church by the sacristy, the ceiling of which is covered with gilded stars, one enters the cloister of the convent. War dwells in the antique refuge of peace; soldiers, the monks of violence, have replaced the monks, the solitaries of peace. A monas-

tery is easily turned into a barracks; regiments and religious communities, solitary multitudes, are alike in one respect, — they have no family. The pavement of the long arcades, which echoed formerly to the monotonous sound of sandals, now re-echoes to the grounding of arms; drums beat where bells tinkled, oaths break out where prayers were whispered, brutal military life spreads through the courtyards; everywhere are gun limbers, racks of arms, cooking-utensils and victuals, — the disciplined disorder of a camp. Along the walls, worn by the weather, carelessness, or the impious coarseness of the soldiery, are yet to be discerned paintings representing the miracles of the founder of the order, constantly occupied in repelling the temptations of the devil, who appears to him sometimes in the shape of a cat, sometimes in that of a monkey, or better still, under the features of a lovely woman.

Leonardo da Vinci's "Last Supper" is on the wall at the end of the refectory; on the opposite wall is a "Crucifixion" by Montorfano, bearing the date of 1495. The painting is good, but who can stand up by the side of Leonardo da Vinci?

Undoubtedly the state of decay of this masterpiece of human genius is most regrettable, yet it is not as

hurtful as might be supposed. Leonardo da Vinci is, above all, the painter of mystery, of the inexpressible, of twilight; his paintings recall musical compositions in the minor key. His shadows are veils which he half draws aside, or thickens so that the spectator shall guess at the secret thought; the tones of his colouring are deadened like the colours of objects in the moonlight, the contours are softened and mellowed as if veiled by black gauze, and time, which diminishes the beauty of other paintings, adds to that of Leonardo's work by increasing the harmonious obscurity in which he loves to dwell.

The first impression made by this marvellous fresco has something dream-like about it. All trace of art has disappeared; the fresco seems to float on the surface of the wall which absorbs it as if it were a light mist. It is the shadow of a painting, the ghost of a masterpiece. The effect produced is perhaps more solemn and religious than if the painting itself were living; the body has disappeared, but the soul survives.

Christ is at the centre of the table, having on his right Saint John, the well-beloved Apostle, who, in an attitude of adoration, with gentle, attentive look, half-opened lips and silent mien, bends respectfully and

affectionately as if pressing his heart upon the Divine Master. Leonardo has given the Apostles strongly marked, rude faces, for the Apostles were all fishermen, workmen, and men of the people. The vigour of their features denotes the power of the muscles, and shows that they belong to the new-born Church. John, with his feminine face, his delicate features, his fine and exquisite complexion, seems to be an angel rather than a man; he is more ethereal than terrestrial, more poetic than dramatic, more of a lover than of a believer; he symbolises the transition between the human and the divine. Christ bears imprinted on His face the ineffable gentleness of the voluntary victim; the azure of paradise shines in His eyes, and the words of peace and consolation fall from His lips like the celestial manna in the desert. The tender blue of His glance, His pallid complexion, — a reflection of which seems to have fallen upon the Charles I by Van Dyck, — reveal the sufferings of the inner cross borne with trustful resignation; He has resolutely accepted His end, and does not turn away from the bitter cup in that last supper. In that face of incomparable suavity one recognises the wholly moral hero whose soul is his strength. The port of

the head, the fineness of the skin, the delicately robust joints, the clean form of the fingers, everything denotes an aristocratic nature amid the plebeian and rustic faces of his companions. Jesus Christ is the Son of God, but He belongs also to the race of the Kings of Judah. Did not a purely spiritual religion require a gentle, noble, purely spiritual leader whom little children might approach without fear? In place of Jesus put Socrates, and the character of that supreme scene is immediately modified. The one will ask that a cock be sacrificed to Æsculapius; the other will offer Himself for victim. The beauty of Greek art is here surpassed by the serenity of Christian art.

I might have remained many days longer in Milan and visited the sixteen Corinthian columns of San Lorenzo, the great hospital of Beljioso, and many a splendid and beautiful church; but I make it a practice to seek nothing after a profound impression, and nothing could surpass Leonardo da Vinci's "Last Supper." Besides, Venice attracted me irresistibly.

I traversed Brescia by night; from Brescia to Verona there is nothing worth mentioning save a glimpse of Lago di Garda near Peschiera; for like the gods of Homer I travelled in a cloud — of dust. The

first aspect of Verona — the name of which inevitably recalls Romeo and Juliet, whom Shakespeare's genius has made two real beings that history would willingly believe in — is very picturesque. The road follows for a time the Adige, which is crossed by a great, curious bridge of red brick with immense arches, parapets with Moorish crenellations recalling those of the walls of Seville, and steps which prevent carriages from crossing over. Red towers with dentellated summits break the sky line very happily, and a splendid antique gateway, composed of two orders of superimposed pillars and arcades, majestically receives the pilgrims.

The Capulets and Montagues might even now quarrel in the streets of Verona, and Tybalt slay Mercutio, for the scene is unchanged. Shakespeare's tragedy is wonderfully accurate. At Verona, as in a Spanish city, every house has a balcony from which may be suspended a silken ladder. Few cities have better preserved their mediæval characteristics. The Gothic arches, the trefoiled windows, the traceried balconies, the pillared houses, the carvings on the corners of the streets, the great mansions with their bronze knockers and their richly wrought gratings,

their entablatures surmounted by statues and full of architectural detail which the pencil alone can reproduce take you back to past times and induce a feeling of surprise at the sight of modern costumes and Austrian Uhlans in the streets.

This sensation is particularly strong on the market-square, which is filled with watermelons, citrons, limes, and tomatoes. The houses, covered with frescoes by Paolo Albasini, with their projecting balconies, their sculptured ornaments, their robust columns, have a most Romanesque appearance. Pillars with intricate capitals give the finishing touch to this square, which is full of admirable subjects for water-colour painters and decorators. It is the most animated part of the city; women are seen at every window, on every doorstep, and the crowd swarms between the stalls of the dealers.

The short time at my disposal compelling me to choose between the apocryphal tomb of Juliet, a sort of trough of reddish marble half-buried in a garden, the tombs of the Scaligers in the open street, and the Roman Amphitheatre, I selected the latter, which is better preserved than even the Arles amphitheatre. The great arena lacks only the outer wall, five or six

arches of which remaining intact would make the restoration of the remainder exceedingly easy. A few weeks' labour would allow of the reproduction within its bounds of the bloody games of the circus. It is easy to recognise the stalls of the *belluaria* and the wild beasts, the entrances and exits for the actors and for the spectators, and the drain by which the waters used in naval displays were carried away; all that is lacking is the public. As if to give an opportunity to compare modern mediocrity with the grandeur of antiquity, a theatre of wooden boards has been built within the arena. It encloses but a few of the benches, while twenty-two thousand people could sit down comfortably in the Roman amphitheatre.

TRAVELS IN ITALY

VENICE

I AM somewhat ashamed of the Italian sky, which in Paris we always believed to be of an unchanging blue, for when I left Verona great black clouds were rising on the horizon. It is a pity to begin a trip to a country of sunshine by descriptions of storms, but truth compels me to confess that rain was falling heavily, first in the distance, then on the middle distance of the country through which I was travelling by rail. The background of the picture was composed of cloud-capped mountains and hills, on which rose mansions and country homes; the foreground was formed of very green, very vivid, and very picturesque cultivated fields. The vine is not planted in Italy as it is in France; it is trained to climb in the form of arbours and to wind upon poles on which its foliage hangs in festoons. Nothing can be more graceful than these long rows of trees which, connected with each other by the tendrils of the vine, seem to hold each others' hands and to dance a great

farandola around the fields. They look like a chorus of vegetable Bacchantes which delight to celebrate in autumn the ancient festival of Lyæus. These vine-tendrils passing from branch to branch impart a wonderful elegance to the landscape. Here and there open farmhouses allowed one to see labourers enjoying their evening meal under their porticos, and gave life to the picture.

The railway passes close to Vicenza and soon reaches Padua, concerning which I can merely repeat the stage directions for the setting of "Angelo": "On the horizon the sky line of mediæval Padua." A tower and a few steeples standing out against a pale strip of sky were all that I could see. The weather did not improve. Blasts of wind, gusts of rain and sudden flashes of lightning pursued us constantly; it was almost cold.

Although the train was running at high speed, it seemed to me, so great was my impatience, that I was travelling on one of the cars drawn by snails seen in Raphael's arabesques. Every man, whether he be a poet or not, makes an ideal home for himself in one or two cities in which he dwells in dreams, inventing the architecture of the palaces, of

the streets, of the houses, and the general aspect, much as Piranesi loved to create in his etchings fantastic buildings, possessed, however, of a strong and mysterious reality. What lays the foundations of this intuitive city? It would be difficult to tell. Narrations, engravings, a glimpse of a map, sometimes the euphony or the singularity of the name, a tale read in one's early youth, the merest trifle, — all add to it. For myself three cities have always greatly preoccupied me, Granada, Venice, and Cairo. I was able to compare the real Granada with my own and to sleep in the Alhambra; but life is so ill arranged, it passes in such awkward fashion, that as yet I knew Venice only through the image produced in the camera obscura of my brain, — an image often so deeply imprinted that reality itself finds it difficult to efface it. I was within half an hour of the real Venice, and I, who never wish that a single grain of sand should fall faster in the hour-glass, so sure am I that death will come, — I would willingly have abridged my life by those thirty minutes. As for Cairo, that is quite another matter, — and besides, Gérard de Nerval had seen it in my place.

In spite of the rain which lashed my face, I bent out of the carriage window in the endeavour to perceive in

the shadow the distant loom of Venice, a faint silhouette of a tower, a gleam of light, but the night was becoming darker, and the horizon was impenetrable. At last, at one station, travellers for Mestre were told to alight. It was at Mestre that boats were formerly taken for Venice; now the railway has replaced the gondola; a long bridge crosses the lagoon and connects Venice with the mainland.

Never have I felt a stranger impression. The train was entering upon the long causeway. The heavens had the appearance of a dome of basalt rayed with dun rays; on either side the lagoon, of a deeper black than the darkness of night, stretched away into the unknown; from time to time the glare of lightnings revealed the waters in a sudden blaze, and the train seemed to proceed through the void like a hippogriff in a nightmare, for neither the heavens, the water, nor the bridge were visible. It was not the sort of entry into Venice that I had dreamed of, but it was far more fantastic than even Martins' imagination could have devised in the way of mystery, stupendousness, and awe when designing a Babylonian or Ninevite avenue. Storm and night had prepared the picture which the lightning drew in lines of fire, and our locomotive recalled the chariots

of fire with wheels of flame that bore the prophets to the seventh heaven.

To arrive by night in a city which one has dreamed of for many and many a year is not an uncommon occurrence when travelling, but it is calculated to excite curiosity to the point of exasperation. To enter the dwelling of one's dream with bandaged eyes is the most irritating thing imaginable. I had already experienced this at Granada, into which I was conveyed by stage-coach at two o'clock in the morning in Cimmerian darkness. The gondola into which I had got on leaving the train, proceeded first along a very broad canal, on the banks of which loomed faintly dark buildings starred with a few lighted windows and lanterns which cast long, quivering beams of light on the black, rippling water. Then it entered narrow waterways with exceedingly complicated turns. The storm which was passing away still lighted the heavens with livid gleams, which enabled me to catch a glimpse of long perspectives and of strange outlines of unknown palaces. We passed under bridges, the two ends of which made a break in the compact, sombre mass of houses. At some of the corners the faint light of a lamp flickered before a Madonna. Curious guttural cries sounded at

the turns of the canals; a gliding coffin with a bending shadow at one end, passed rapidly by; a low window, close to which we swept, gave us a glimpse of an interior lighted by a lamp or reflected light, recalling Rembrandt's etchings; doors, the threshold of which was lapped by the waters, gave passage to mysterious figures that vanished at once; staircases dipped into the canal and seemed to rise through the shadow towards mysterious Babels; the striped posts to which the gondolas are made fast in front of the sombre façades looked like spectres. On the bridges faint human shapes, like wan figures in a dream, watched us pass by. Sometimes every light disappeared, and we proceeded in sinister fashion amid four kinds of darkness: the oily, dank, deep darkness of the waters, the tempestuous darkness of the night sky, and the opaque darkness of the two walls, on one of which the gondola's lantern cast reddish gleams which showed pedestals, shafts of pillars, porticos, and gratings that disappeared forthwith.

Every object on which fell in this darkness a stray beam of light, assumed mysterious, fantastic, terrifying and exaggerated proportions. The water, always so awesome at night, increased the effect by its low rip-

pling, its universality, and its restlessness. The gleam of the few lamps cast long, bloodlike trails upon it, and its dense mass, black as Cocytus, seemed to stretch its complacent mantle over crimes untold. It surprised me not to hear the fall of a dead body hurled from a balcony or a half-opened door. Never was reality more unreal than that on that evening; I seemed to be living in a novel of Maturin's or Lewis' or Anne Radcliffe's illustrated by Goya, Piranesi, or Rembrandt; the old stories of the Three Inquisitors, of the Council of Ten, of the Bridge of Sighs, the Wells and the Leads, of executions on the Orfano Canal, of the melodramatic and the Romanticist stage-setting of old Venice, came back to my memory in spite of myself, made more sombre still by reminiscences of "The Confessional of the Black Penitents" and "Abellino, or The Great Bandit." I was filled with terror, cold, dank, and dark as all around, and I involuntarily thought of Malipiero's speech to Tisbé when he depicts the terror the name of Venice fills him with. This impression is absolutely accurate, though it may seem exaggerated, and I think that even the most positive Philistine would find it difficult to avoid it. I will go further and say that it is the true meaning of Venice, which emerges

at night out of modern transformations, — Venice, a city which seems to have been built by a scene painter, and the manners and customs of which seem to have been arranged by a dramatic author, for the purpose of making plots and *dénouements* more interesting. Darkness restores the mystery which it loses in the daylight, puts on its commonplace inhabitants the mask and domino of old days, and imparts to the most ordinary motions of life a look of intrigue and crime. Every door that half opens seems to give egress to a lover or a bravo, every gondola which glides by silently must surely bear away a couple of lovers or a dead body with a broken stiletto planted in its heart.

At last our craft stopped at the foot of a marble staircase, the lower steps of which were bathed by the sea, in front of a façade every window of which was lighted up. We had reached the former Palazzo Giustiniani, now transformed into a hotel, as is the case with several other Venetian palaces. Half a dozen gondolas lay in front of the door like carriages awaiting their owners. A great monumental staircase led to the upper stories, on each of which was a long hall and side apartments looking out on the canal and on the mainland.

While awaiting supper, I leaned on the balcony ornamented with marble columns and Moorish arches. The rain had stopped; the clear, well-washed sky was brilliant; the stars of the Milky Way showed against the darker azure like unnumbered millions of white spots, and numerous meteors rayed the horizon with their swiftly vanishing trail of light. A few brilliant points, stars upon earth, shone on the other bank, which was partially revealed; the faint outline of a dome showed on my right on the opposite side of the canal, and as I bent forward, I discovered on the left a blazing line of lights, which I imagined must be the lamps on the Piazzetta. Other sparks of light, like those which dot burnt paper, wound about on the dark background. These were the lanterns of gondolas going and coming.

The next morning my first impulse was to run to the balcony. I was at the extrance to the Grand Canal, opposite the Dogana, a handsome edifice with columns in the Rustic order, adorned with bosses and supporting a square tower ending in two Hercules kneeling back to back and bearing upon their robust shoulders a globe upon which turns a nude figure of Fortune, bald behind and with long hair in front, hold-

ing back with its hands the two ends of a veil which forms a vane and yields to the slightest breath of wind; for this figure is hollow like the Giralda at Seville. Near the Dogana rose the white dome of Santa Maria della Salute, with its volutes, its pentagonal staircase, and its wealth of statues. I at once recognised the Salute from the beautiful painting by Canaletto in the Louvre. In the background I caught sight of the Giudecca Point and the island of San Giorgio Maggiore, on which, above the Austrian battery, rises Palladio's church with its Greek façade, its Oriental dome, and its Venetian belfry of the brightest rose. There was a swimming bath at the mouth of the canal, and numerous craft of varying tonnage, from the fishing-boat to the steamer and the full-rigged ship, the spars and rigging of which were outlined against the serene blue of the morning. The boats which bring provisions to the city were coming up under sail or propelled by oars. It was a beautiful picture, as bright as that of the previous evening was sombre.

It is difficult for a stranger to traverse Venice on foot, so my first care was to hire a gondola. Although this craft has been worked to death in comic operas, songs, and tales, that is no reason why it should not

be better known. It is the natural product of Venice, an animated being with its particular local life, a sort of fish which can exist only in the waters of a car. The lagoon and the gondola are inseparable; they [illegible] each other. Venice is impossible with [illegible] gondola; the craft is narrow and long, [illegible] the two ends, drawing but little water [illegible] outline it resembles a skate. The [illegible] with a flat, polished piece of iron which [illegible] resemblance to the neck of a swan, or rather, [illegible] handle of a violin with its keys. Six teeth, the interstices of which are sometimes adorned with open-work, help out the resemblance. This piece of iron is an ornament, a defence, and a counterweight, the boat being more heavily trimmed aft. By the rail of the gondola, near the bow and the stern, are two pieces of wood shaped like ox-yokes on which the gondolier leans his oar, he himself standing on a low platform with his heel set against a chock. The whole boat is tarred or painted black; the floor is brightened with a more or less rich carpet; in the centre is placed a cabin, or *felze*, which can easily be removed when it is desired to substitute an awning,—a piece of modern degeneracy which makes every good Venetian

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groan. The *felze* is hung with black cloth and provided with two soft cushions of morocco leather of the same colour, with sloping backs. In addition there are two folding seats on either side, so that four people can be accommodated. On each side of the cabin is cut a window, usually left open, but which may be closed in one of three ways: first, by a plate of Venetian glass bevelled or with a framework of flowers engraved on the glass; secondly, by a blind with movable slats so that one can see without being seen; and thirdly, by a curtain, over which, if one desires more privacy, may be dropped the hangings of the *felze*. These three different blinds slide along a groove. The door, which one has to enter backwards, for it would be difficult to turn in the narrow space, has only a window and a shutter. The wooden part of the door is carved with greater or less richness according to the means of the owner or the taste of the gondolier. On the left side of the casing of the door shines a copper shield surmounted by a coronet, on which the owner engraves his coat of arms or his monogram; above there is a small glazed frame which opens from within and which holds the image of the personage to whom the owner or the gondolier is especially devoted, — the

Blessed Virgin, Saint Mark, Saint Theodore, or Saint George. It is on that side also, but still lower, that the lantern is hung, a custom which is beginning to disappear, for many gondolas travel without their star in front. The left is the place of honour, on account of the coat of arms, the saint, and the lantern; it is the seat taken by ladies, aged persons, and distinguished personages. At the back a movable panel affords communication with the gondolier posted at the stern. He it is who steers the craft, his sweep being used at one and the same time as a sweep and as a rudder. Two silk cords help you to rise when you want to go out, for you are seated very low. The cloth hangings of the *felze* are adorned on the inside with tassels of silk not unlike those on priests' hats, and when you desire to shut yourself up completely, the cloth covers up the back of the cabin like the pall upon a coffin. To complete the description, I must add that the inside of the rail is adorned with white arabesques upon a black background. The general appearance is certainly not cheerful, and yet, if we are to believe Byron's Beppo, there occur inside these black gondolas scenes as comical as in the carriages at a funeral. Madame Malibran, who disliked greatly to enter these small

catafalques, tried, but unsuccessfully, to have the colour changed. It seems gloomy to us, but it does not strike Venetians in this way, for they are accustomed to the use of black by the sumptuary laws of their old republic, and with them the hearses and palls and the undertakers wore red.

I had chosen a gondola with two men. The steersman, tanned by the sun, with his little Venetian cap on the back of his head, a thick collar of tawny beard, sleeves rolled up, white trousers and belt, fully recalled his former prototypes. The one in the bow, much more of a modern dandy, wore a cap, from below which showed a lovelock; a striped cotton jacket, and modern trousers, and thus united in his person the gondolier and the guide. As it was fine, an awning with blue and white stripes had, much to my regret, taken the place of the *felze*, under which I would willingly have stifled with heat through sheer love of local colour.

I gave directions to be taken at once to the Piazza San Marco. As we pushed off, I had an opportunity to observe the façade of the hotel, which was really splendid, with its three stories of balconies, its Moorish windows, and its slender marble columns. But for a

wretched sign placed over the portico and bearing the words, "Hôtel de l'Europe, chez Marseille," the Palazzo Giustiniani would have looked exactly as it does on Albert Dürer's superb plan, save for the two windows on the third story cut by the side of the original bay, which is still visible in the wall; and the former owners, if they were to return from the other world in the gondola of Charon, the boatman of Hades, would easily find their dwelling on the Grand Canal, still intact, though dishonoured. It is a peculiarity of Venice that, although its drama has come to an end, the setting of the past has remained in its place.

The gondoliers row standing, bending over their oars. One wonders that they do not constantly fall into the water, for the whole weight of their bodies bears forward. Long habit gives them the skill needed to preserve that attitude; during their apprenticeship they must tumble over more than once. They are wonderfully clever in avoiding collisions, in shaving corners, coming alongside *traghetti* (ferry landings) or steps. The gondola answers the helm so quickly that it seems to be a living being.

A few strokes of the sweeps soon brought me to one of the most marvellous prospects which the human

eye can behold, — the Piazzetta seen from the sea. Standing in the bow of the motionless gondola, I gazed for some time in mute ecstasy upon that unrivalled picture, the only one, perhaps, that imagination cannot surpass. On the left, looking from seaward, the trees in the Royal Garden form a green line above the white terraces; next come the Zecca (or Mint), and the old Library, the work of Sansovino, with its elegant arches and its crown of mythological statues; on the right, separated by a space which forms the Piazzetta — the vestibule to the Piazza San Marco — the Palace of the Doges shows its golden façade with its diaper of rose and white marble, its massive pillars, supporting a gallery of slender columns, the ribbing of which contains quatrefoils, with six ogival windows, a monumental balcony enriched with brackets, niches, finials, statues, and surmounted by a statue of the Virgin; its acroter, the acanthus leaves of which alternate against the sky with a spiral fillet, which runs up the angles and ends in traceried pinnacles. At the back of the Piazzetta towards the Library rises to a prodigious height the Campanile, a great brick tower with high-pitched roof surmounted by a golden angel. Near the Palace of the Doges is seen a corner of the peristyle of

San Marco which faces on the Piazza. The prospect is closed by the Procuratie Vecchie and the Clock Tower with its bronze jacks, its lion of St. Mark on a starry blue ground, and its great azure dial on which are marked the twenty-four hours.

In the foreground, opposite the landing-place for gondolas, between the Library and the Palace of the Doges, rise two huge, monolithic columns of African granite, formerly rose-coloured, but now washed with cooler tones by rain and weather. On the left one, as viewed from the sea, stands in a triumphant attitude, his brow encircled by a metal halo, sword by his side, lance in hand, leaning upon his shield, a Saint Theodore of splendid port trampling a crocodile under foot; on the right hand one, the Lion of Saint Mark in bronze, wings displayed, lips turned back, one paw on the Gospel, turning its back to Saint Theodore's crocodile with the fiercest and grimmest look that a heraldic animal can have. The two monsters appear to be determined not to be good company.

It is said to be unlucky to land between the two columns, where formerly executions took place, and I requested the gondolier, when landing me, to do so at the staircase on the Zecca or at the Ponte della Paglia

(Bridge of Straws), not caring in the least to end like Marino Faliero, who came to grief because a storm had thrown him at the foot of these formidable pillars. Beyond the Palace of the Doges is seen the New Prison, with which it is connected by the Bridge of Sighs, a sort of cenotaph suspended over the Canal della Paglia; then a curving line of palaces, houses, churches, buildings of all kinds which forms the Riva degli Schiavoni (Quay of the Slavonians) and which ends in the green masses of the Public Garden on the point which stretches into the sea. Near the Zecca debouches the Grand Canal and rises the Dogana di Mare, which, with the public Garden, forms the two ends of that panoramic curve along which Venice stretches like a marine Venus.

I have noted as accurately as I could the principal features of the picture, but what should be rendered is the effect, the colour, the mass, the shimmer of air and water, the life. How can I express the rosy tones of the Palace of the Doges which seems like lovely flesh, the snowy whiteness of the statues, the contours of which show against the azure of Veronese and Titian, the glow of the Campanile caressed by the sun, the flash of the distant gilding, the innumerable aspects of

the sea, sometimes transparent as a mirror, sometimes sparkling like a dancer's skirt? Who can paint the infinite, luminous atmosphere full of beams and of haze, with its sunshine and clouds; the coming and going of gondolas, of boats, of argosils, of galliots, the red and the white sails, the vessels with their cutwaters touching the quays, with their innumerable picturesque details of flags, nets, and lines hung up to dry; sailors loading and unloading ships, boxes carried out, barrels rolled along; the varied, many-coloured people on the quays, Dalmatians, Greeks, Levantines, and others whom Canaletti would mark with a single touch? How can I show all this at once, as in nature, when I am compelled to name one thing after another? For the poet, less fortunate than the painter and the musician, can use but a single line; the former has his whole palette, the second his whole orchestra.

The landing-place at the Piazzetta is adorned with Gothic lanterns, ornamented with figures of saints and planted on posts that rise out of the water. One of these lanterns was presented by the Duchess of Berry. Gondolas crowd at this fairy landing, which is the most frequented of all. In order to reach the shore, the axe-head of the gondola has to be used like a wedge in

order to divide the clustering mass. When you land, numbers of old and young ragged beggars hasten up provided with sticks with a nail at the end, with which they hook the boat as with a boat-hook and steady it while you set foot on shore, an operation which at first is somewhat difficult in consequence of the extreme crankiness of the frail craft. It is well understood, of course, that this anxious care is not intended to prevent your falling in or wetting your feet on a lower step. A dirty hand or a filthy cap, humbly outstretched, invites you to drop in an Austrian penny or cent as a recompense for the service done.

On the bases of the two columns are seated gondoliers waiting for customers, mendicants, half-naked children who seek a living on the streets of Venice, — a whole Picaresque population that worships sunshine and *far niente*. Formerly the bases of the columns were adorned with sculptures, now, alas! worn away by constant rubbing. They appear to have been intended to represent figures holding fruits and foliage. Saint Theodore's pillar leans somewhat towards the Library, that of the Lion of Saint Mark towards the Palace of the Doges. The Piazzetta façade of the Palace of the Doges is similar to that on the water

side. It has, like the latter, a great window, whence Manin, when resigning the provisional government after the capitulation of Venice in 1849, harangued the people for the last time. At the end of the façade is the Piazza, which lies at right angles to it and, as its name indicates, is very much larger.

The four sides of the Piazza are formed by the façade of the Basilica of San Marco, situated near the Palace of the Doges, the Clock Tower, the Procuratie Vecchie and the Procuratie Nueve, which are companion buildings, and an ugly modern palace in the classical taste, stupidly built in 1809 to provide a Throne Room, in the place of the charming church of San Germiniano, the elegant style of which corresponded so well with that of the Basilica. The Campanile, adorned at its base by a charming little building by Sansovino, called the Loggetta, stands alone at the corner of the Procuratie Nueve. On nearly the same line are planted the three flag-staffs from which formerly flew the standards of the Republic.

From the end of the square the prospect is fairylike and dazzling, however well prepared one may be by paintings and descriptions. There stands San Marco, with its five cupolas, its porticos brilliant with mosaics

and golden pigments, its traceried finials, its immense stained-glass window, in front of which rear the four horses of Lysippus, its gallery of slender columns, its winged lion, its ogee gables with their fleurons of foliage that bear statues, its pillars of porphyry and antique marbles, its triple aspect of temple, basilica, and mosque; a strange and mysterious, exquisite and barbaric building, an immense heaping up of riches, a pirates' church formed of pieces stolen or won from every civilisation.

A brilliant light made the great Evangelist shine again under his starry sky, the mosaics sparkled, the silvery gray cupolas showed like the domes of Saint Sophia's in Constantinople, and flocks of doves flew constantly from the cornices of the balustrades and lighted fearlessly on the square. It seemed to be an Oriental dream turned to stone by the might of some enchanter, a Moorish church or Christian mosque built by a converted Caliph.

Like the Seville Giralda, the Campanile has no stairs. It is ascended by a slope up which one could ride, so gentle is it. The interior is formed of a brick, cage-like structure, with long openings, around which winds the slope. At every pillar a small loophole, cut out of one of the faces of the tower, admits sufficient

light. After a long climb you reach the platform on which are the bells. Red and green marble columns support four arches, one on each face of the Campanile, which allow the eye to wander over the whole extent of the horizon. A spiral staircase enables the sight-seer to ascend still higher up to the foot of the gilded angel, but it is useless fatigue to do so, for the whole panorama of Venice is easily seen from the lower platform.

Leaning on the balcony and looking below and seaward, is seen, first, the roof of Sansovino's Library, covered with Venuses, Neptunes, Mars, and other allegorical figures. It is now the Royal Palace. Next comes the roof of the Palace of the Doges, covered with sheets of lead. The glance reaches down into the court of the Zecca, and the Piazzetta, with its pillars and gondolas, shows its pavement divided into compartments; beyond is the sea, studded with islands and vessels.

San Giorgio Maggiore, with its red steeple, its two white bastions, its basin, its girdle of vessels attracted by the Porto Franco, lies in the foreground. It is separated from the Giudecca by a canal. The Giudecca, the maritime suburb of Venice, with its line of houses towards the city, and its girdle of gardens towards the sea, has two churches, Santa Maria and Il Redentore,

the white cupola of which shelters a Capuchin convent. Beyond San Giorgio are seen the Sanita, a small island, San Servolo, with the lunatic asylum, and finally the Lido, a barren, sandy shore, which, with the long, narrow, low spit of land called Malamocco, forms the rampart of Venice against the waters of the Adriatic.

Behind the Giudecca, farther and farther on the horizon, show against the blue sea the Grazia, San Clemente, the place of penitence and imprisonment for priests, Poveglia, the quarantine station, and beyond the Malamocco line, almost invisible in the glinting of the waters, the little island of San Pietro. The eye recognises these islands by one of the tall Venetian towers, of which the Campanile seems to be the prototype.

Over all this sea there is an infinite coming and going of vessels, gondolas, and crafts of all kinds. Lines of posts mark along the lagoon the special channels, for the usual depth is not more than three or four feet. Beyond, the eye is lost in the great stretch of azure which might be mistaken for the sky, did not a sail gilded by a sunbeam undeceive you. The transparency of the sky, the limpidity of the water, the brilliancy of the light, the clearness of the outlines, the depth and

delicacy of the tones, all combine to make this vast view dazzlingly splendid.

If one turns towards the back of the Piazza, the prospect is equally varied. First there is the continuation of the Giudecca, the Dogana, with its wild-haired Fortune, the Salute, with its double dome; the entrance to the Grand Canal which, in spite of its breadth, soon disappears between the houses; San Moisè and its steeple, joined to the church by a bridge; Santo Stefano, with its brick tower surmounted by a statue on a crescent; the great red church of Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari, the high pitched arch of which shows above the roofs; the black cupola of San Simeone Piccolo, the only one of this colour in Venice, because instead of being roofed with lead, it is roofed with copper, producing amid the silver coverings of the other churches the same effect as the armour of mysterious knights in mediæval tourneys. Then at the extremity of the still invisible canal, San Geremia, the dome and tower of which were struck by cannon-balls during the siege. Behind San Geremia show the green trees of the Botanical Gardens, and close to the railway station the Scalzi exhibit their façade, almost concealed by scaffolding.

Between these churches, which rise above ordinary buildings like the idea which gave them birth, spreads a swelling ocean of heaving roofs and tumbled tiles, and spring thousands of round, square, turban-shaped, turreted chimneys, and others swelling out like flower-pots, of the strangest and most unexpected shapes. Cut out some façade or some corner of a palace, standing out from the crowd of houses, and you have a foreground bathed in a warm, clear, golden light, which brings out wondrously the delicate blue of the sea, which you behold above the roofs, marked only by two islands, San Angelo del Polvere and San Giorgio in Alga.

On the far horizon the Euganean Mountains, a branch of the Friuli Alps, form a wavy, azure outline. At the foot of the mountains, broad green strips denote the rich cultivated land of the main, and Padua shows against the sky line, softened by the distance. An ashy-coloured shore, laved probably by the tide, — for there is an ebb and flow in the Adriatic, though none in the Mediterranean, — forms a transition and a gradation between the land and the water. The railway bridge, easily seen from this height, crosses the lagoon, connects Venice with the mainland, and turns

the island into a peninsula. Fusina and Mestre lie outside, the first to the left, the second to the right of the railway.

The third arch of the Campanile, looking towards the Clock Tower, frames in Santa Maria del' Orto, the tall red belfry and high, tiled roof of which are distinctly seen; Santi Apostoli with their lofty white turret adorned with a dial and a cross on a globe; the Gesuiti, with the mannered and tawdry statues of the façade showing against the blue of the sea; and then the usual accompaniment of chimneys and roofs. It is remarkable that nowhere is a trace of a canal to be seen; the cuts which these waterways should make amid the islands of houses are not even suspected. The whole prospect forms a compact block, a petrified tempest of tiles and roofs, upon which the churches show like vessels at anchor.

Turning somewhat towards the right, the glance falls upon the bell-turret of the great cupola of Santi Giovanni e Paolo, a great brick building; the elegant tower of Santa Maria Formosa, which makes a white mark upon the tawny tints of the picture; and, beyond, the island of San Segundo, a little sea-girt fort; in the distance the cemetery, with its rose-coloured walls,

marked by two churches, San Cristoforo and San Michele, a green spot studded with black crosses. In the same direction, near the centre of the lagoon, Murano, where was manufactured the Venice glass which still adorns many a sideboard, attracts the glance by the red campanile of its church degli Angeli, the roof of San Pietro, and three tall cypresses which rise like dark steeples out of a group of houses and trees.

Looking out of the fourth arch of the campanile, beyond the Palace of the Doges, are seen San Francesco della Vigna and its steeple, noticeable for its red panels with their edges of white, San Andrea, and San Zaccaria, whose gray dome surmounted with balls and crosses like the cross of San Marco, and its high façade formed of three rounded gables, rise from the maze of houses. The Arsenal, with its square tower, rose above, white below, its basins of gleaming water, its vast building sheds like the arches of an aqueduct; its pulleys, engines, and its general appearance of store-house and rope-walk; and farther away, the dome and steeple of San Pietro di Castello, the triangular gable and the spire of Santa Elena.

Towards the open sea show Burano, Mazorbo, and Torcelle, where the first Veneti settled. Owing to the

distance, all one can see is a few green, cultivated fields, houses, and three churches, one of which is more discernible than the others; then beyond, sky or water, a white curl of foam, a passing sail, a gull soaring in the blue haze, a bright immensity, the greatest of immensities.

SAN MARCO

LIKE the Mosque at Cordova, which it resembles in more than one respect, the Basilica of San Marco has greater superficial area than height, unlike Gothic churches which spring heavenwards with their lancets, their steeples, their finials. The great square cupola is only one hundred and ten feet in height. San Marco has preserved the characteristics of primitive Christianity when, scarce emerged from the catacombs, it sought, not having yet designed a form of art for itself, to build a church with the remains of the temples of antiquity and on the lines of pagan art. Begun in 979 under Doge Pietro Orsealo, the Basilica of San Marco was slowly completed, each century adding some treasure or some beauty; and yet, strange as it may seem and contrary to all ideas of proportion, that agglomeration of pillars, capitals, *bassi-relievi*, enamels, mosaics, that mingling of the Greek, Roman, Byzantine, Arab, and Gothic styles, forms the most harmonious *ensemble*.

This incoherent temple, in which a pagan could find an altar to Neptune, with its dolphins, its tritons, its shells turned into holy-water basins; in which a Mohammedan might believe himself in the *Mihrab* of his mosque as he beheld the lines inscribed on the vault like *sourahs* of the Koran; in which the Greek Christian would find his *Panagia* crowned like an empress of Constantinople, his barbaric Christ with interlaced monogram, the special saints of his own calendar drawn in the manner of Pansolinos and the monkish painters of the holy mountain; in which the Roman Catholic feels that in the shadow of the naves illumined by the dun reflection of the golden mosaics, live and breathe the unshakable faith of early times, submission to dogma and to hieratic forms, the mysterious and deep Christianity of the days of belief; — that church, I repeat, built of contradictory pieces, enchants and caresses the eye more than the most correct and symmetrical architecture could possibly do. Unity springs here from diversity. Semicircular arches, Gothic arches, trefoils, slender pillars, fleurons, cupolas, marble slabs, backgrounds of gold, brilliant colours of mosaics, all combine with the most wondrous success to form the most magnificent monumental bouquet.

The façade has five portals giving access to the church, and two leading under the exterior side galleries; in other words, seven openings, three on either side of the great central porch. The central portal is marked by two groups of four columns of porphyry and verd antique on the first story, and six on the second, which support the spring of the semicircular arch. The other porches have two pillars only at each of the two stories. I speak now of the façade only, for the interior of the porches is adorned with numerous other slender columns in cipolin and pentelican marble, jasper, and other costly materials.

Let us examine more particularly the mosaics and ornaments of this wonderful portal. Beginning with the first arch on the sea side, there is, above a square door closed by an iron grating, a Byzantine plating in black and gold in the shape of a reliquary with two angels placed against the moulding of the edge. Above, in the tympanum of the arch, is a great mosaic with a golden background, representing the body of Saint Mark taken from the crypts of Alexandria and smuggled through the Turkish customs between two sides of bacon, the pig being a loathsome animal which the Mussulmans hold in abomination, and contact with

which would compel them to endless ablutions. The infidels draw away with gestures of disgust, and stupidly allow the body of the holy Apostle to be borne away. This mosaic was made from the designs of Pietro Vecchia about the year 1650. In the spandrel of the archivolt on the right is set an antique bas-relief, — Hercules carrying on his shoulders the stag of Erymanthus and trampling under foot the Lernean Hydra; and in the left spandrel (as the spectator looks at it), by one of those contrasts so frequent in San Marco, — the Angel Gabriel standing winged and booted with a halo around his head, leaning on his lance, forming a curious pendant to the son of Alcmene and Jupiter.

In the second arch is a door not in symmetry with the other. It is surmounted by a window with a triple Gothic arch, between which are two quatrefoils, the whole window surrounded by a border of enamels. The mosaic of the tympanum, which is also on a gold background like all those in San Marco, represents the arrival of the Apostle's body at Venice, where it is received on landing by the clergy and the chief men of the state. The vessel which has brought it and the willow baskets which contained it are also shown. This mosaic is likewise by Pietro Vecchia.

A Saint Demetrius, seated, with his sword half-drawn from the sheath, and his name engraved near the head, looking very fierce and very much in the style of the Lower Empire, continues the series of *bassi-relievi* set within the façade of the basilica as in a museum.

We are now at the central gate, the great portal, the outer arch of which cuts the marble balustrade which runs above the other arches. Very properly it is the richest and the most ornamental. Besides the numerous pillars of antique marble which support it and prove its importance, three wreaths, two on the inside and one on the outside, bring out strongly the form of the arch by their projections. These three garlands of ornaments, carved, wrought, and finished with marvellous patience, are composed of a thick spiral of foliage, scrolls, flowers, fruit, birds, angels, saints, small figures, and chimeras of all kinds. The arabesques in the third wreath spring from the hands of two statues seated one at each end of the spiral. The gates themselves, with their bronze leaves studded with the faces of fantastic animals, are surmounted by a niche with open-worked, trellised, and gilded panels like those of a triptych or a cabinet. The upper portion of the arch is filled by a Last Judgment of great size designed by

Antonio Zanchi and reproduced in mosaic by Pietro Spagna. This work is of about 1680, and was restored in 1838 in accordance with the original design. The Christ, which somewhat recalls the Christ of Michael Angelo in the Sistine Chapel, is separating the wicked from the good. Near Him stand His divine Mother and His beloved Apostle, Saint John, who appear to be interceding on behalf of the sinners. He leans on His cross, which is supported with respectful solicitude by an angel, while other angels sound their trumps loudly to awaken in their tombs the obstinate sleepers.

It is above this portal, on the gallery which runs around the church, that are placed upon pedestals formed of antique pillars the famous horses which for a brief time adorned the Triumphal Arch of the Carrousel. Opinions are greatly divided on the subject of these horses. Some maintain that they are Roman work of the days of Nero, brought to Constantinople in the fourth century; others that they are Greek work from the Island of Chios, brought in the fifth century, by order of Theodosius, to Constantinople, where they served to decorate the Hippodrome; others, again, maintain that these horses are the work of Lysippus. What is quite sure is that they are antiques, and that in

the year 1205 Marino Zeno, who was the Venetian Podestate at Constantinople, had them brought from the Hippodrome and sent to Venice. These horses, which are life-size, somewhat short-necked, with hog manes like the horses on the Frieze of the Parthenon, rank among the finest remains of antiquity; they are historical and true to life, — a rare combination. Their attitudes show that they were harnessed to some triumphal quadriga. The metal of which they are made is no less precious than the form. They are, it is said, of Corinthian bronze, the greenish patina of which shows through the gilding, which time has worn away.

The fourth portal is arranged, so far as the lower part goes, like the second. The tympanum of the arch is filled with a mosaic representing the doge, the senators, and patricians of Venice doing homage to the body of Saint Mark stretched upon a reliquary and covered with a brilliant blue drapery. In the corner stands a group of Turks, ashamed that such a treasure should have been smuggled away from them. This mosaic, which is one of the most brilliant in tone, is the work of Leopoldo del Pozzo, from the designs of Sebastian Rizzi, in 1728. It is exceedingly beautiful. One of

the senators in a purple dress is worthy of Titian. In the spandrel of the archivolt on the side of the main portal is a Saint George in Greco-Byzantine style, and in the other an angel or some unknown saint.

The fifth portal is one of the most interesting. The lower part contains five small windows with a golden trellis of diverse designs. Above are the four symbolical animals of the Gospel writers in gilded bronze, — the ox, the lion, the eagle, and the angel, — as fantastically designed as Japanese monsters, casting suspicious glances at each other; while a strange horseman, on a steed which may be Pegasus or the Pale Horse of the Apocalypse, rides between two golden rosettes. The capitals of the pillars are also in a ruder, more archaic and more vigorous taste than any of the others. Higher still, a mosaic, the work of an unknown artist of the twelfth century, contains a most interesting picture, a view of the basilica erected to receive the relics of Saint Mark as it existed eight hundred years ago. The domes, of which three only are visible, and the portals of the façade, are about the same as now; the horses, recently brought from Constantinople, are already in their places. The centre arch is filled with a great Byzantine Christ with the Greek monogram, and the

others with roses, fleurons, and arabesques; the body of the saint, borne shoulder-high by prelates and bishops, is entering into the church dedicated to him. A crowd of figures, among them groups of women dressed in long gowns studded with enamels, dressed as one imagines the Greek empresses must have been, are pressing forward to see the ceremony.

The series of contrasting *bassi-relievi*, the subjects of which I have enumerated, is closed on this side by a Hercules bearing the boar of Calydon and appearing to menace a small grotesque creature half concealed within a barrel. Below this bas-relief are stretched two rampant lions, and lower still an antique figure in high relief holds an amphora upside-down on its shoulder. This theme, no doubt suggested by chance, has been cleverly reproduced in other parts of the edifice.

This row of porches forming the ground story of the façade, is bordered with a balustrade of white marble. The second story has five arches, the centre one of which, larger than the others, rises behind the horses of Lysippus; and in lieu of a mosaic is glazed and adorned with antique pillars.

Six canopies, of four columns each, forming niches for the statues of evangelists, and topped by a pyramidal

roof ending in a golden crown and vane, rise between these arcades, the semicircular tympanum of which is enclosed in and surmounted by a Gothic arch. The subjects of the four mosaics represent the Ascension, the Resurrection, Jesus calling Adam and Eve and the patriarchs from limbo, and Luigi Gaetano's Descent from the Cross, from the design of Maffeo Verona in 1617. In the spandrels of the arch are placed nude figures of slaves, life-size, bearing on their shoulders urns and amphoræ which lean over as if the slave sought to pour from above into a basin the water drawn from the fountain. Gutters are fitted to the hollow amphoræ, for the slaves are gargoyles. Their attitudes are very varied and their port is superb. In the ogee of the great central window above the semicircular arch, stands out, on a dark blue background spangled with stars, the Lion of Saint Mark, gilded, with a halo, its wings outspread, its paw upon an open Gospel, upon which are inscribed the words: "*Pax tibi, Marce Evangeliste meus.*" The lion has an apocalyptic and formidable look, and gazes out to sea like a vigilant dragon.

Saint Mark, in human form, rises above the gable and seems to receive the homage of the neighbour-

ing statues. The ogee of each of the five arches is crocketed with great volutes, flowers, rich fleurons in the shape of acanthus leaves, with, by way of a flower, an angel or a saint in adoration. On every gable end there is a statue, — Saint John, Saint George, Saint Theodore, Saint Michael, all of them with a halo.

At each end of the balustrade there are two flag-staffs painted red, on which are hoisted the standards on Sundays and feast days. At the corner of the railing on the campanile side is planted a head cut off, in red porphyry.

The side façade, which looks upon the Piazetta and touches the Palace of the Doges, is worthy of examination. If, in spite of all possible care and accuracy, my description may appear confused, do not blame me very much; it is difficult to depict very methodically so hybrid, composite, and contrasting an edifice as San Marco. From the Porta della Carta, which leads to the Giant Staircase in the court of the Palace of the Doges, the façade of the basilica is covered with slabs of marble, and antique Byzantine and mediæval *bassi-relievi*, birds, monsters, a net-work of ribbons, animals of all kinds, — lions and wild beasts chasing hares; children half swallowed by dragons which

resemble the great serpent of Milan, and holding in their hands cartouches the inscriptions on which are half effaced.

Among the curiosities on this façade are two porphyry figures twice repeated, exactly alike. They represent warriors in very much the costume of Crusaders entering Constantinople, and they are carved in a most primitive and barbarous fashion like the rudest of Gothic *bassi-relievi*. These porphyry men, their hands on the hilts of their swords, appear to be resolved on some violent deed. The general opinion is that they are Harmodeus and Aristogiton preparing to strike down the tyrant Hipparchus. The learned Cavaliere Mustoxidi believes they represent the four brothers Anemuria, who conspired against Alexander Comnenus, the Emperor of the East; but they may be simply the four sons of Aymon, — that is my opinion. Others, again, maintain that these four porphyry men are two pairs of Saracen robbers, who, having planned to carry off the treasure of Saint Mark, poisoned each other in order to secure the larger share.

It is on this side that are planted separately two huge pillars taken from the church of San Saba at St. Jean d'Acre. They are covered all over with curious orna-

ments and inscriptions in Cufic characters, almost effaced, the meaning of which has not been fully made out. Somewhat farther, at the corner of the basilica, is a huge block of porphyry in the shape of a broken shaft, with a pedestal and capital of white marble. It was a sort of pillory on which bankrupts were formerly exposed. The custom has fallen into desuetude, but it is rare to see any one sit there, and Venetians, who are so ready to drop down on the nearest pedestal or staircase, appear to avoid it.

A bronze gate leading to the Baptistery Chapel fills the first porch. Over it is a columned window with ogee and quatrefoils. Two shields of enamels in brilliant colours, one bearing a cross, and a traceried rose window, complete the decoration of the tympanum. A mosaic representing Saint Vitus in a niche, and an Evangelist holding a book and a pen, are seen in the two lower parts of the arch. A small pediment in the Renaissance taste, and slabs of white marble cut by a green cross fill the second porch. A bench of red Verona brocatello forms at the foot of this sort of miniature façade a comfortable seat for the idler or the dreamer, who, with his feet in the sunshine and his head in the shade, after the fashion of Zafari, is think-

ing of nothing or of everything while looking at Sansovino's Loggetta at the foot of the Campanile, or at the blue sea and the island of San Giorgio at the end of the façade.

On the capitals of verd antique which support this arch crouch two apocalyptic monsters, strange shapes seen by Saint John in his hallucinations in the Isle of Patmos. The one, which has a hooked beak like an eagle, holds a small heifer with its legs drawn up under itself; the other, which is half lion and half griffin, has driven its claws into the body of a child thrown crosswise; one of the claws seems to be putting out the victim's eye. The angle is formed by a detached, squat pillar which bears a shaft of five smaller pillars on its broad capital. In the vaulting of this open portal, covered with a veneer of various marbles, there is a mosaic representing an eagle holding a book in its talons.

The second story shows on the gable arches two finely posed statues of the cardinal virtues: Strength caressing a tame lion, which fawns like a joyous dog, and Fortitude holding a sword with the air of a Bradamante. The sacristan has christened one of these Venice, and the other Queen of Sheba.

Incrustations in malachite, various enamels, and two small angels in mosaic holding out the cloth which preserved the impression of the Divine Face; a great, barbaric Madonna presenting her Son to be worshipped by the faithful, flanked by two lamps which are lighted every evening; a bas-relief of peacocks displaying their tails, which comes perhaps from some old temple of Juno; a Saint Christopher bearing his burden; capitals of basket-work most charmingly capricious, — these are the riches which this side of the Basilica offers to the stroller on the Piazetta.

The other lateral façade looks upon a small square which is the continuation of the Piazza. At the entrance crouch two lions in red marble, cousins-german to those in the Alhambra by the quaint fancifulness of their shapes and the grotesque ferocity of their faces and their manes. They are polished to a wonderful degree, for from time immemorial the little ragamuffins of Venice have spent their days in climbing on top of them and using them as vaulting horses. At the back rises the palace of the Patriarch of Venice, of modern construction, which would be a pretty dull building were it not thrown into the shadow by San Marco; and on the side, the old façade of the church of San Basso.

This façade is somewhat less ornamented than the other. It is overlaid with discs, mosaics, enamels, ornaments, arabesques, of all times and of all countries, birds, peacocks, curiously shaped eagles like the alerions and martlets of heraldry. The lion of Saint Mark also plays its part in the symbolical menagerie. The tympana of the porches are filled either with small windows surrounded by palms and arabesques, or with incrustations of antique or Byzantine fragments. In the medallions are carved men and animals fighting. A closer examination would no doubt reveal the bull of Mithra struck in the neck by the priest, and thus no religion would be wanting in this artlessly pantheistic temple. Surely this must be Ceres seeking her daughter, a branch of burning pitch pine in each hand by way of a torch, and riding on a car drawn by two bronze dragons. It might be a Hindoo idol, so archaic is the style and so much does it recall the carvings of Persepolis. It is a curious pendant to a Sacrifice of Abraham in bas-relief which must be ascribed to the earliest period of Christian art.

Another bas-relief composed of two lines of sheep, six on either hand, looking at a throne and separated by two palm branches, interested me greatly, for I should

have liked to know its meaning. In vain I endeavoured to make out the inscription in Gothic or abbreviated Greek letters which no doubt states the subject. It may be that the sheep are meant for cows; in that case the bas-relief would represent Pharaoh's dream. An antique fragment set in the wall somewhat farther away represents an adept being initiated into the Eleusinian mysteries, and placing a crown upon a mystic palm. This does not prevent Saint George from showing on the archivolt on a throne in the Greek style, and the four Evangelists, Saint Mark, Saint John, Saint Luke, and Saint Matthew, marching along the tympanum, the gables, and the vaulting, either alone or accompanied by their symbolical animals.

The portal which opens into that arm of the cross formed by the Basilica, is surrounded by a broad, double moulding, carved and open-worked, presenting a delightful bloom of scrolls and foliage and angels. A lovely Virgin forms the keystone. Above the door rises a horseshoe arch like those of the Mosque at Cordova, an Arab fancy seasonably corrected by a very Christian and pretty Nativity, most devotional in feeling. Beyond that I need mention only a Saint Christopher, apostles, and saints in checkered frames of

white and red marble, and a pretty Virgin, seen full face, her hands bent as if in blessing, placed between two angels kneeling in worship.

I have spoken of a porphyry head placed on the balustrade above the short shaft on which bankrupts were exposed. According to a popular tale, the accuracy of which I do not warrant, Count Carmagnola, after great services done to the Republic, having sought to seize the power for himself, the Council of Ten, conciliating justice and gratitude, had him beheaded, and then erected to his memory a monument which consists of this pedestal and porphyry head, a strange statue from which the body is wanting, and the head of which on the balustrade seems to be exposed as a leader of malefactors is exposed in a cage; but the pillory is San Marco, the sacred place, the Capitol and palladium of Venice. When the hero was tortured to compel him to make the confession needed, according to the ideas of the time, to insure his condemnation, his arms, which had valiantly fought for the state, were spared, and his feet were placed in the fire; a strange mingling of deference and cruelty which is well in harmony with the legend.

The basilica of San Marco is entered, like a temple of antiquity, by an atrium, which anywhere else would

be a church. The three red marble slabs in the pavement mark the spot where the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa knelt to the proud Pope Alexander III, saying, "*Non tibi, sed Petro*," to which the Pope replied, "*Et Petro et mihi.*" How many feet, since the twenty-third day of July, 1177, have worn away the imprint of the knees of the great Emperor, who now rests within the cavern of Kaiserslautern waiting until the crows cease to fly over the mountain. Three bronze doors, incrusted, inlaid, and enamelled with silver, covered with figures and ornaments, and opening into the nave, come, it is said, from Saint Sophia's at Constantinople. One of them is signed Leon de Molina. At the end of the vestibule on the right is seen through a grating the Zeno Chapel with its bronze retable and tomb. The statue of the Virgin, placed between Saint John the Baptist and Saint Peter, is called the *Madonna della Scarpe* (the Madonna of the Shoe), from the golden shoe on her foot worn away by the kisses of the faithful. This metallic decoration has a curiously severe aspect. The vaulting of the atrium represents, in mosaic, Old Testament subjects: first, for all religious history begins with a cosmogony, the Seven Days of the Creation as told in Genesis, placed in concentric com-

partments. The archaic barbarity of the style has a wild and primitive mysteriousness which suits the sacred subjects. The stiff drawing is as absolute as dogma, and appears to be rather the hieroglyph of a mystery than a reproduction of nature. This is what gives to these rough Gothic images a power and a commanding look which more perfect works lack. The blue, starry globes, the blue and silver discs which represent the firmament, the sun, and the moon, the many lines which figure the separation between water and land, and that curious personage with impossible gestures, whose right hand creates animals and trees of impossible shape and who bends like a mesmeriser over the first man asleep, the mingling of angular lines and of brilliant tones strike the eye and the mind like an inextricable arabesque and a deep symbolism. The verses of Scripture traced in antique characters, complicated by abbreviations and double letters, add to the hieroglyph a genetic aspect. It is, indeed, a world arising out of chaos. The Tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the Temptation, the Fall, the Expulsion from Paradise, complete the cosmogonic and primitive cycle, the quasi divine period of humanity.

Farther on, Cain slays Abel after having seen his own sacrifice rejected by the Lord; Adam and Eve cultivate the ground by the sweat of their brow; the legend "Increase and multiply" is artlessly translated by a pair of lovers. The four columns engaged against the wall above these mosaics are merely ornamental, for they sustain nothing, and are of Oriental white and black marble, exceedingly rare. They were brought from Jerusalem, and tradition holds that they formed part of Solomon's Temple. Assuredly Hiram, the architect, would not think them out of place in San Marco.

In the next arch Noah, in accordance with the commandment of the Lord and in anticipation of the flood, is seen building the Ark, into which are entering two by two all the animals in creation, — an admirable subject for a simple-minded mosaic worker of the fifteenth century. Most curious it is to see outspread upon the golden background the fantastic zoölogy which smacks of heraldry, arabesques, and the signs of travelling menageries. The Flood is most formidable and sombre indeed; it is entirely different from the much bepraised taste of Poussin. The foam of the waves mingles quaintly with the fast falling rain; the raven and the dove coming forth from the Ark, the

sacrifice of thanksgiving, — nothing is wanting. That closes the antediluvian cycle. Verses of Scripture which wind in and out everywhere like the inscriptions in the Alhambra and which form part of the ornamentation, explain each phase of the vanished world. The idea is ever side by side with the image; the Word soars everywhere over its plastic representation.

The story, interrupted by the entrance porch, which is adorned with mosaics, the Virgin with archangels and prophets, is continued under the other arches. Noah plants the vine and gets drunk; Japhet, Shem, and Ham, blackened by the paternal curse, go forth, each to found a race of humankind; the Tower of Babel raises to the heavens the artless anachronism of its Byzantine architecture, and calls down on itself the attention of God, annoyed at being so closely approached; the confusion of tongues compels the workmen to give up their work; the human race, which until then was single and spoke the same language, is now about to begin its long pilgrimage through the unknown world in order to recover its title deeds and to reconstitute itself.

The next arches, placed, the first in the vestibule, the others in the gallery opposite the Hall of Lions,

contain the story of the Patriarch Abraham in detail, that of Joseph and Moses, with a company of prophets, priests, evangelists, — Isaiah, Jeremiah, Elias, Samuel, Habbakuk, Saint Alipius, Saint Simeon, and innumerable others who are in groups or lines in the arches, in the pendentives, in the keystones, wherever can be placed a figure which cares neither for comfort nor anatomy, and does not mind breaking its arm or leg in order to adorn an out-of-the-way angle.

All these biblical legends, full of artless details of curious Oriental fashions, produce a superb and strange effect on the golden background, the brilliancy of which darkens them and brings them out. These old mosaics, probably the work of Greek artists brought from Constantinople, are much more agreeable to me than more modern mosaics which attempt to be pictures; for instance, the one which covers the gallery wall on the San Basso side, below the story of Abraham, and which represents the Judgment of Solomon from cartoons by Salviati. Mosaic, like painting on glass, should not seek to imitate nature. Cleanly drawn, typical forms, plain colours, broad local tones, golden backgrounds, entirely removed from the idea of a painting, — these are suitable to it. A mosaic is opaque stained glass,

just as stained glass is transparent mosaic. The palette of the master mosaic-worker is composed of stones, that of the stained-glass painter of gems; neither the one nor the other should seek absolute truth.

At the end of a gallery, in the tympanum of a door, I greatly admired a Madonna seated on a throne between Saint Peter and Saint John, presenting the Child Jesus to the faithful. It is one of the finest in San Marco. The head, with its great fixed eyes which penetrate you without looking at you, is imperial and imperious in its gentleness. One could swear that Helena or Irene embroidered in Byzantium the cushion on which she rests. The Mother of God, as the Greek monogram calls her, and the Queen of Heaven could not be represented in more majestic fashion. Certain crudities of drawing, which might be considered hieratic, impart to this figure the look of an idol, or an *eikon*, to make use of the expression of the Greek Christians, which seems to me indispensable for devotional subjects. Under the gallery there are three tombs, one of which, noticeable for its antiquity, represents Jesus Christ and the Twelve Apostles ranged in a row above a line of thuriferæ.

To close the description of the interior of Saint Mark, let us enter the Baptistery, which communicates

with the cathedral by a door. The altar is formed of a stone brought from Mount Tabor in 1126 by Doge Domenico Michiele. What the Spaniards call the retable, the Italians *la pala*, and the French the altar-piece, is here a Baptism of Jesus Christ by Saint John, placed between two angels carved in bas-relief. Saint Theodore and Saint George on horseback are placed on either side, and above there is a great mosaic of the Crucifixion, with the Holy Women, against a background of gold of architectural design. The mosaic in the vaulting represents Jesus Christ in glory, surrounded by a great circle of heads and wings arranged concentrically. It gleams, sparkles, shimmers, flames with a strange impression of whirling; archangels, thrones, powers, virtues, principalities, cherubs, and seraphs mingle their oval faces and cross their purple wings so as to form an immense rose, like a Turkish carpet. At the feet of the Almighty writhes Satan in chains, and conquered Death grovels before the triumphant Christ.

The next arch, most singular in aspect, exhibits the Twelve Apostles each baptising Gentiles of a different country. The catechumens are, according to the ancient custom, plunged in a basin up to the armpits,

and the lack of perspective gives them constrained attitudes and piteous looks which make the baptism resemble a torture. The apostles, with exaggerated eyes and harsh, fierce features, look like executioners and torturers. Four Fathers of the Church, Saint Jerome, Saint Gregory, Saint Augustine, and Saint Ambrose, are placed in the pendentives. The black crosses with which their dalmatics are covered, have a sinister and funereal look. This is, indeed, the general character of the baptistery. The mosaics are of the greatest antiquity. They are the oldest in the church, are ferociously barbarous, and tell of an implacable and savage Christianity.

In the arch of the vaulting there is a great medallion representing Christ in a most terrible aspect; no longer the well-known, gentle, fair-haired Christ, the young, blue-eyed Nazarene, but a severe and dread Christ, with a long, gray, wavy beard like that of God the Father, for the Father and the Son are coeternal. Eternal wrinkles mark His brow, and His mouth is contracted, ready to launch anathemas. He seems to despair of the salvation of the world He has saved, or to repent of His sacrifice. Siva, the god of destruction, could not have a more sombre and threatening look in the

subterranean pagoda at Ellora. Around this avenging Christ are grouped the prophets who foretold His coming.

On the walls is told the story of Saint John the Baptist: the angel announcing to Zacharias the birth of the Precursor; his life in the desert, clad in the rough skins of beasts; the baptism of Christ in the Jordan, a mosaic more Hindoo than Byzantine, and more Caribbean than Hindoo in character, so eccentric is the appearance of the thin body and the waters figured by blue and white stripes; Herodias dancing before Herod; the Beheading of the Baptist and the bringing in of the head upon a silver dish, which was a favorite subject of Juan Valdes. In these latter mosaics Herodias, wearing a long dalmatic edged with vair, recalls the dissolute empresses of Constantinople, the great courtesans of the Lower Empire, — Theodora, for instance, luxurious, lascivious, and cruel. A singular symmetry marks the banquet scene. While Herodias brings in the head on one side, a servant man on the other brings in a pheasant on a dish. Food and murder thus mingled have an artlessly horrible effect. The baptismal font is formed of a basin of marble with a bronze cover, the *bassi-relievi* on which, modelled in

1545 by Desiderio of Florence and Tiziano of Padua, both pupils of Sansovino, recall the motive of the story of Saint John. The statue of the saint, also in bronze, is by Francesco Segala, and forms an admirable crown to the work. Against the wall is the tomb of Doge Andrea Dandolo.

Let us now enter the Basilica. Above the door is a Saint Mark in Pontifical vestments, from a cartoon of Titian's by the Zuccatto brothers, which suggested to George Sand the subject of a charming novel, "The Master Mosaic Workers." The brilliancy of the mosaic explains why jealous rivals accused the clever artists of having employed paint instead of making use of ordinary means. On the inner impost stands Christ between His Mother and Saint John the Baptist; this mosaic is in good Lower Empire style, imposing and severe.

Nothing can be compared to San Marco in Venice, neither Cologne nor Seville, nor even Cordova with its mosque. The effect is surprising and magical. The first impression one has is of entering a golden cavern studded with gems, splendid and sombre, sparkling and mysterious; one wonders whether it is within a building or an immense jewelled casket that one stands, for

all ideas of architecture are upset. The cupolas, the vaulting, the architraves, the walls, are covered with small tubes of gilded crystal of unchanging brilliancy, made at Murano, on which the light gleams as on the scales of a fish, and which form a background for the inexhaustible fancy of the mosaic workers. Where the golden background stops at the top of the pillars, begins a plating of the most precious and varied marbles. From the vaulting hangs a great lamp in the shape of a four-armed cross with *fleurs de lys* suspended from a golden ball of filigree work, of marvellous effect when the lights are lighted. Six pillars of wavy alabaster, with gilded bronze capitals in the most fantastic Corinthian style, support elegant arches above which a gallery runs almost entirely around the church. The cupola forms, with the Paraclete as an axle, with palms for spokes, and the Twelve Apostles for the circumference, a vast wheel of mosaics.

In the pendentives tall, serious-looking, black-winged angels stand out against a background illumined by gleams of tawny light. The central dome, which rises at the intersection of the arms of the Greek cross which forms the plan of the Basilica, presents within its vast cupola Jesus Christ seated upon a rain-

bow in the centre of a starry circle supported by two pairs of seraphim. Below him the Divine Mother, standing between two angels, worships her Son in glory; and the Apostles, each supported by a quaint tree, which represents the Garden of Olives, form the celestial court of their Master. The theological and cardinal Virtues are between the columns of the windows of the smaller dome which lights the vaulting. The Four Evangelists, seated under canopies in the shape of castles, are writing their precious books at the base of the pendentives, the extreme point of which is filled with emblematic figures pouring from urns inclined upon their shoulders the four rivers of Paradise, — Pison, Gihon, Tigris, and Euphrates.

In the next cupola, the centre of which has in a medallion the Mother of God, the four symbolical animals of the Evangelists, in chimerical and astounding attitudes, free for once from the guardianship of their masters, guard the sacred manuscripts with a wealth of teeth, claws, and big eyes which would shame the dragons of the Hesperides. At the end of the apse, which shows dimly behind the high altar, is seen the Redeemer, of gigantic and disproportionate size, made so intentionally, according to the Byzantine custom, to

mark the distance between the Divine Person and the weak creature. If that Christ were to rise, he would, like the Olympian Jupiter, break through the roof of the temple.

The atrium of the Basilica tells the Old Testament story; the interior tells that of the New Testament in full, with the Apocalypse by way of epilogue. The Basilica of San Marco is a great golden Bible, illustrated, illuminated, adorned, a missal of the Middle Ages on a great scale. For eight centuries past the city has been reading that monument as if it were a book of pictures, and has never wearied of its pious adoration. By the image runs the text. Everywhere ascend, descend, and meander legends in Greek, in Latin, Leonine verse, sentences, names, maxims, specimens of the caligraphy of every country and every age. Everywhere the black letter marks the golden page amid the variety of the mosaics. It is even more the Temple of the Word than the church of Saint Mark; an intellectual temple which, careless of all the orders of architecture, was built with verses of the old and the new faith, and ornamented by the exposition of the doctrine. I wish I could convey the dazzling and bewildering impression caused by that world of

angels, apostles, evangelists, prophets, doctors, figures of all kinds, which people the cupolas, the vaulting, the pediments, the arches, the pillars, the pendentives, — every little bit of wall. Here the genealogical tree of the Virgin spreads out its thick branches which have for fruits kings and holy personages, filling a vast panel with its curious bloom; there shines a Paradise, with its glory, its legions of angels and of the blessed. This chapel contains the story of the Virgin; that vaulting contains the drama of the Passion, from the kiss of Judas to the appearance of the Holy Women, not forgetting the Agony in the Garden of Olives and Calvary. All those who have testified to Jesus, either by prophecy, preaching, or martyrdom, have been admitted to this great Christian Pantheon. Here is Saint Peter crucified head down, Saint Paul beheaded, Saint Thomas in the presence of the Indian king Gondoforo, Saint Andrew suffering martyrdom; not a single servant of Christ is forgotten, not even Saint Bacchus. Greek saints whom we Latins know but little of swell this great multitude: Saints Phocas, Dimitri, Procopius, Hermagoras, Euphemia, Dorothea, Erasma, Thekla, all the lovely exotic flowers of the Greek calendar, which may well be painted in accordance with the

recipes of the "Manual of Painting" of the monk of Aghia-Labre, bloom on trees of gold and branches of gems.

At certain hours of the day, when the darkness deepens and the sun sheds but a faint light under the vaulting, the poet and the seer behold strange effects. Tawny gleams suddenly flash from the golden background, the small crystal tubes sparkle in spots like the sea in the sunshine, the contours of the figures tremble in the glimmering network, the silhouettes, clearly marked just now, become fainter, and the stiff folds of the dalmatics seem to soften and wave; a mysterious life revives the motionless figures; the staring eyes live, the arms, with their Egyptian gestures, move; the frozen feet begin to walk; the cherubs display their eight wings; the angels exhibit their long azure and purple plumes nailed to the wall by the implacable mosaic worker; the genealogical tree shakes its leaves of green marble; the lion of Saint Mark stretches itself, yawns, and licks its armed paws; the eagle sharpens its beak and ruffles its feathers; the ox turns on its litter and chews the cud; the martyrs rise from their gridirons or descend from their crosses; the prophets converse with the Evangelists, the doctors talk to the young

saints, who smile with porphyry lips; the characters in the mosaics become processions of phantoms which ascend and descend along the walls, move along the galleries, and pass before you in the waving gold of their glory. You are dazzled, bewildered; you are under the spell of a hallucination. The real meaning of the cathedral, its deep, mysterious, solemn meaning seems then to become plain. It appears to be the temple of a Christianity anterior to Christ, a church built before religion was. The centuries are lost in infinite perspective. Is not the Trinity a *trimourta?* Is it Horus or Krishna whom the Virgin holds in her lap? Is it Isis or Parvati? Does that figure on the cross suffer the passion of Jesus or the trials of Vishnu? Are we in Egypt or in India? — in a temple of Karnak or in a pagoda of Juggernath? Are these figures in constrained attitudes very different from the processions of coloured hieroglyphs which twist and turn around the pylons and sink in the passages?

When the eye descends from the vaulting to the ground, it sees on the left a small chapel dedicated to a miraculous Christ, which, having been struck by a profane hand, shed blood. The dome, supported by columns of excessive rarity, all of which are of black

and white porphyry, is closed by a ball formed of the largest agate in the world.

At the back extends the choir with its balustrade, its porphyry columns, its row of statues carved by the Massegne brothers, and its great metal cross by Jacopo Benato. It has two pulpits in coloured marble, and an altar which shows under a dais between four columns of green marble carved like Chinese ivory by patient hands, which have inscribed upon it the whole story of the Old Testament in small figures a few inches in height. The altar-piece, called the *pala d'oro*, is placed within a case, painted in compartments in the style of the Lower Empire. The pala itself is a dazzling mass of enamels, cameos, niello, pearls, garnets, sapphires, gold and silver work, and painting in gems, representing scenes of the life of Saint Mark, surrounded by angels, apostles, and prophets. The pala was made in Constantinople in 976 (1105) and rearranged in 1342 by Giambi Bonsegna. The second or cryptic altar behind the high altar is remarkable only for its four columns of alabaster, two of which are extraordinarily transparent. Near the altar is a wonderful bronze door in which Sansovino set by the side of his own the portraits of his great friends, Titian,

Palma, and Aretino. The door leads to a sacristy on the vaulting of which blazes a wondrous mosaic in arabesques, executed by Marco Rizzo and Francesco Zaccato from drawings by Titian. Nothing richer, more elegant, or more beautiful can be imagined.

It would take more space than I have at my disposal to describe in detail the chapels of Saint Clement, of the Madonna dei Mascoli, in which there is a magnificent retable by Nicolo Pisano, and the treasures of art met with at every step: now an alabaster Madonna with her *bambino*, exquisitely suave, now a bas-relief charmingly wrought, in which the peacocks' tails form a halo, or a Turkish arch embroidered with Arab lace-work and checker-work of enamelled arabesques; then a pair of bronze candelabra, chased in a way to discourage Benvenuto Cellini, — some object of art either curious or venerable.

The mosaic pavement, which waves like the sea in consequence of the age and the settling of the piles, presents the most astounding medley of arabesques, scrolls, fleurons, lozenges, and interlacing checker-work, storks, griffins, open-mouthed, winged, and taloned chimeras, ramping and climbing like the monsters of heraldry. One is fairly terrified and confounded by

the creative power displayed by men in this ornamental fancifulness; it is a world as varied, as numerous, as swarming as the other, but which draws its forms from itself alone.

How much time, care, patience, and genius, how much cost must have been involved for eight centuries in consummating this immense mass of riches and masterpieces! How many golden sequins have been melted into the glass of the mosaics! How many antique temples and mosques have yielded up their pillars to support these capitals! How many quarries have been exhausted to provide the slabs for the pillars and the overlayings of Verona brocatelle, of portor, of lumachella, of red alabaster, of cyphisus, of veined granite, of mosaic granite, of verd antique, of red porphyry, of black and white porphyry, of serpentine of jasper! What armies of artists, following each other from generation to generation, have drawn, chased, and carved in this cathedral! Even leaving out the unknown, the humble workmen of the Middle Ages, lost in the night of time, who buried themselves in their work, what a long line of names might be drawn up worthy of being inscribed on the golden book of art! Among the painters who furnished cartoons

for the mosaics, — for there is not a single painting in the sanctuary, — are numbered Titian, Tintoretto, Palma, Padovanino, Salviatino, Aliense, Pilotti, Sebastian Rizzi, Tizianello; among the master mosaic-workers, at the head of whom must be placed old Petrus (author of the colossal Christ at the back of the church), are the brothers Zuccati, Bozza, Vincenzo Bianchini, Luigi Gaetano, Michele Zambono, Giacomo Passerini; among the sculptors, all men of prodigious talent, whom one is surprised to find are not better known, Pietro Lombardi, Campanetti, Zuanne Alberghetti, Paolo Savi, the brothers della Massegne, Jacopo Benato, Sansovino, Pietro Zuana, delle Campania, Lorenzo Breghno, and many others, any one of whom would suffice to make an epoch illustrious.

In front of the church rise the three standards, supported by the bronze pedestals of Alessandro Leopardi which represent marine deities, and chimeras exquisite in workmanship and polish. The three standards were formerly those of Cyprus, Candia, and Moro, the three maritime possessions of Venice; now on Sundays the black and yellow banner of Austria alone waves in the breeze which comes from Greece and the Orient.

THE PALACE OF THE DOGES

THE Palace of the Doges, in its present form, dates from the time of Marino Faliero, and has replaced an older building founded about 814 under Angelo Participazio and continued by different doges. Marino Faliero it was who caused to be built in 1355 the existing façades on the Molo and the Piazzetta. The building proved unlucky to both the Doge and the architect: the former was beheaded, the latter hanged.

The strange edifice, which was at once a palace, a Senate house, a Court house, and a prison under the government of the Republic, is entered by an exquisite door on the San Marco corner between the pillars of Saint Jean d'Acre and the enormous squat column which bears up the whole weight of the mighty white and rose marble wall that imparts such striking originality to the Palace of the Doges. This door, called della Carta, is in a charming architectural style, ornamented with slender pillars, trefoils, and statues, and,

of course, the inevitable winged lion and Saint Mark. It leads through a vaulted passage into the great inner court. This peculiar placing of the entrance, outside, as it were, the building to which it leads, has the advantage of not interfering in any way with the unity of the façade, which is broken by no projection save that of the monumental windows.

Above the huge, heavy column of which I have spoken there is a fierce looking bas-relief representing the Judgment of Solomon. The mediæval costumes and a certain savageness in the execution make it difficult to recognise the subject. On the other side, towards the sea, are the figures of Adam and Eve, and on the angle cut by the Ponte della Paglia, the Sin of Noah. The old man's arm, carved with fine Gothic dryness, shows every muscle and every vein.

On the Piazzetta, on the second story, two columns of red marble mark the place where were proclaimed sentences of death, a custom which still persists. The thirteenth capital of the lower gallery, counting from Saint Mark, is also highly praised. It contains in eight compartments as many ages of human life very cleverly rendered. For the matter of that, all the capitals are in exquisite taste and wonderfully varied; there are no

two alike. They contain monsters, angels, children, fantastic animals, biblical or historical subjects, mingled with scrolls, acanthus leaves, fruits, and flowers. Several bear half-effaced inscriptions in Gothic characters. There are seventeen arches on the Molo and eighteen on the Piazzetta.

The Porta della Carta leads to the Giants' Staircase, which is in no wise gigantic in itself its name being due to two colossi some twelve feet in height, by Sansovino, representing Neptune and Mars, placed on pedestals at the top of the stairs. It leads from the court to the second gallery, which runs within as well as without the palace, and it was built under the rule of Doge Agostino Barberigo by Antonio Rizzi. It is in white marble, and decorated by Domenico and Bernardino of Mantua with arabesques and trophies in very low relief, but so perfect as to drive to despair all decorators, jewellers, and niello workers in the world. It ceases to be architecture; it is goldsmith's work such as Benvenuto Cellini and Vechte alone could produce. Every bit of the open-worked balustrade is a marvel of invention; the arms and the helmets of each bas-relief, all dissimilar, exhibit the rarest fancifulness and are in the purest style; the very steps themselves

are inlaid with exquisite ornaments. And yet who knows about Domenico and Bernardino of Mantua? Human memory, already overladen with hundreds of illustrious names, refuses to remember more, and consigns to oblivion some which deserve to be glorious.

At the foot of the stairs are placed, where is usually found the railhead, two baskets of fruit worn by the hands of people who ascend. The statues of Neptune and Mars, in spite of their great size and the exaggerated prominence of the muscles, are somewhat weak, considered æsthetically, but set off by the architecture, they have a proud and majestic look. On the plinth is the artist's name, who, I consider, did far better work in his statuettes of the Apostles and in the door of the sacristy of San Marco.

On turning around at the top of the stairs, one sees the inner side of Bartolommeo's façade covered with volutes, slender columns, and statues, with vestiges of blue colouring starred with gold in the pediments of the arches. Among these statues, one especially is exceedingly remarkable. It represents Eve, and is the work of Antonio Rizzi of Verona in 1471. Its charming form exhibits a certain Gothic timidity of style, and its ingenuous pose recalls with adorable

awkwardness the attitude of the Venus of Medici, the pagan Eve. The other façade, which looks upon the Cisterns, was built in 1607 in the Renaissance style, with pillars and niches holding antique statues brought from Greece, representing warriors, orators, gods, and goddesses. A clock and a statue of Doge Urbino, the work of Gio Bandini of Florence, complete the severe and classical façade.

On looking at the centre of the court are seen what appear to be magnificent bronze altars. They are the openings of the cisterns, by Nicolo de Conti and Francesco Alberghetti. The one is of 1556, the other of 1559, and both are masterpieces. They represent, besides the usual griffins, sirens, and chimeras, various aquatic subjects drawn from Scripture. It is impossible to imagine the richness, the invention, the exquisite taste, the perfection of carving, the finish of the work of these well margins, which are improved by the polish and the patina of time. Even the interior of the cistern mouth, overlaid by bronze plates, is enriched by a damasked design in arabesques. The two cisterns are said to hold the best water in Venice, therefore they are greatly frequented, and the ropes by which the pails are pulled

up have worn in the bronze edges grooves two or three inches deep.

Nowhere else in Venice is there a better place to study the interesting class of women water-carriers, whose beauty is somewhat gratuitously famous, in my opinion, for if I did see a few pretty ones, I saw very many more ugly and old. Their costume is rather striking. They wear tall men's-hats of black felt and a long black skirt which comes up under their arms like an Empire gown; their feet are bare, as well as their legs, although they sometimes wear on the latter a sort of *knemis* or footless stocking, like the peasants of the Valencian Huerta. Their chemise, of coarse linen, plaited on the bosom and with short sleeves, completes their dress. They carry the water on their shoulders in two pails of red copper which balance. Most of these women are Tyrolese.

At the very moment when I stopped at the head of the staircase, there was bending over the brazen margin of Nicolo de Conti's cistern one of these young Tyrolese, who was pulling up with difficulty, — for she was short and delicate, — a full pail of water. Her neck showed, under the masculine head-

dress, her pretty, fair hair and the upper part of her white shoulders, on which the hot sun had not yet tanned the snows of the mountain. A painter would have found in this a subject for a pretty picture. Personally I greatly prefer to the habit of walking between two pails the Spanish and African manner of carrying the water on the head in an amphora held in equilibrium. Women thus gain an astonishing nobility of port. By the way they stand and walk, one would think they were antique statues. But I have talked enough about water-carriers.

Near the Giants' Staircase is seen an inscription framed in with ornaments and figures by Alessandro Vittoria, recalling the passage of Henry III through Venice, and farther along, in the gallery at the entrance to the Golden Staircase, two statues by Antonio Aspetti, — Hercules, and Atlas bending under the starry firmament, the weight of which the robust hero is about to take on his bull neck. This exceedingly magnificent staircase, ornamented with stucco work by Vittoria and paintings by Gianbattista was built by Sansovino, and leads to the Library which now occupies several rooms in the Palace of the Doges.

The former assembly hall of the Great Council (Sala del Maggior Conseglio) is one of the largest in existence. The Court of the Lions at the Alhambra could easily be put within it. One is struck with astonishment on entering, for, thanks to an effect frequent in architecture, the hall appears to be very much larger than the building which contains it. Sombre and severe wainscoting, in which bookcases have taken the place of the stalls of the former senators, serves as a plinth to immense paintings which run around the wall, broken only by the windows, under a line of portraits of the doges, and a colossal ceiling gilded all over, incredibly rich and exuberant in ornamentation, with vast compartments, square, octagonal, oval, with branches, volutes and *rocaille*, in a style not very appropriate to the style of the palace, but so grandiose and magnificent that it fairly dazzles one. One of the sides of the hall — that in which is the entrance door — is filled completely by a gigantic "Paradise" by Tintoretto, which contains a whole world of figures. The sketch of a similar subject in the Louvre may give an idea of this composition, of a kind which suited the fiery and disorderly genius of that virile artist who so

thoroughly bore out the meaning of his name, Jacopo Robusto; for it is a robust painting, and it is a pity that time has darkened it so much. The murkiness which covers it would suit a picture of Hell equally as well as a picture of Paradise. Behind this canvas there exists, it is said, an old painting of Paradise done on the wall in green camaieu by Guariento of Padua in the year 1365. It would be interesting to compare the green paradise with the black. It takes Venice to have one painting upon another.

The hall is a sort of Versailles Museum of Venetian history, with the difference that although the exploits represented are less, the painting is far superior. No more marvellous prospect can be imagined than this vast hall covered all over with these pompous paintings in which the Venetian genius excelled, most skilful as it was in the arrangement of great works. On all sides there is the shimmer of velvet, the sheen of silk, the sparkle of taffeta, the brilliancy of gold brocade, the bossing of gems, the heavy folds of stiff dalmatics, the fantastic chasing of cuirasses and morions, damascened with light and shade and reflecting gleams like mirrors. The sky fills in with the blue peculiar to Venice the interstices of the white

pillars, and on the steps of the marble staircases stand splendid groups of senators, of warriors, of patricians and pages, which form the usual population of a Venetian painting. The battles exhibit an indescribable chaos of galleys with three-storied castles, tops, look-outs, triple banks of oars, towers, war machines, overthrown ladders bringing down clusters of men; an amazing mingling of galley drivers, of galley slaves, of sailors, of men-at-arms, killing each other with maces, cutlasses, and barbarous engines; some bare to the belt, others dressed in singular harness or in Oriental costumes in capricious and eccentric taste, like those of Rembrandt's Turks; all swarming and fighting, against a background of smoke and fire, or on waves which throw up between the galleys their long, green crests ending in flakes of foam. It is regrettable that in many of these paintings time has added its smoke to that of battle, but imagination profits by the loss to the eye. Time gives more than it takes from the pictures it works over. Many masterpieces owe a portion of their merit to the patina with which the ages have gilded them.

Above these great historical paintings runs a series of portraits of Doges by Tintoretto, Bassano, and

other painters. Generally they have dark and repellent faces, although they are beardless, contrary to the generally accepted opinion. In one corner the eye stops at an empty black frame which marks a break as sombre as a tomb in the chronological gallery. It is the place which should have been filled by the portrait of Marino Faliero, as is told in the inscription: *Locus Marini Phaletri, decapitati pro criminibus.* Every effigy of Marino Faliero was also destroyed, so that his portrait is not to be found. It is said, however, that there is one in the possession of a Verona amateur.

Let me add concerning Marino Faliero that he was not beheaded at the top of the Giants' Staircase, because that staircase was not built until one hundred and fifty years later, but at the opposite angle at the other end of the gallery on the landing of a stair since destroyed.

I shall name, without pretending to describe them in detail, the most celebrated halls in the palace: the Sala dei Scarlatti, the mantelpiece of which is covered with marble reliefs of the most delicate workmanship. There is also placed over it a very curious marble bas-relief representing Doge Loredano kneel-

ing before the Virgin and Child accompanied by several saints. It is a capital work by an unknown artist. The Sala dello Scudo, where were placed the arms of the living Doge; the Sala dei Filosofi, in which there is a very beautiful chimney-piece by Pietro Lombardi; the Stanze dei Stucchi, thus named on account of its ornamentation. It contains paintings by Salviati, Pordenone, and Bassano, — a Madonna, a "Descent from the Cross," and a "Nativity." The Banquet hall, where the Doge gave state dinners, — diplomatic dinners, as one would say to-day. It has a portrait of Henry III by Tintoretto, strongly painted and very handsome, and opposite the door a warmly painted "Adoration of the Magi," by Bonifazzio. The Sala delle Quattro Porte, preceded by a square hall the ceiling of which, painted by Tintoretto, represents "Justice handing the sword and the scales to the Doge Priuli." The four doors are decorated by statues of fine port by Giulio del Moro, Francesco Caselli, Girolamo Campagna, Alessandro Vittoria; and masterpieces of painting, among others one representing the "Doge Marino Grimani kneeling before the Virgin, with Saint Mark and other saints," by Contarini; and another of Doge Antonio, also

kneeling before Faith, by Titian, a splendid, golden painting in which simplicity is in no wise diminished by the ceremonious style. The compartments of the ceiling were designed by Palladio, the stucco work is by Vittoria and Bombarda, from the designs of Sansovino. A "Venice" by Tintoretto, led by Jupiter over the Adriatic in the centre of a court of deities, fills the central compartment.

Let us pass next from this hall into the Ante Collegio, the waiting-room of the ambassadors, designed by Scamozzi. The envoys of the various powers who came to present their letters of credit to the Most Serene Republic, cannot have felt in a hurry to be introduced; the masterpieces accumulated in this splendid antechamber would enable one to wait patiently. The four paintings placed near the door are by Tintoretto, and are among his best. I know of none to equal them save the "Adam and Eve," and the "Abel and Cain" in the Academy of Fine Arts. The subjects are: "Mercury and the Graces," "The Forge of Vulcan," "Pallas, accompanied by Joy and Abundance, driving away Mars," "Ariadne consoled by Bacchus."

The marvel of this sanctuary of art is the "Rape of Europa" by Paolo Veronese. The lovely maid is

seated as upon a silver throne upon the back of the divine bull, whose snow-white chest breaks into the blue sea, which seeks to reach with its amorous ripples the feet of Europa, which she draws up with a childish dread of wetting them,— an ingenious detail in the "Metamorphoses" which the painter was careful not to forget. Europa's companions, not knowing that the god has taken the noble form of that handsome animal so gentle and so familiar, crowd upon the bank and cast garlands of flowers at it, unaware that Europa, thus carried away, is going to give her name to a continent and to become the mistress of Zeus with the black eyebrows and the ambrosial hair. How beautiful show the white shoulders, the fair neck with the tressed hair, and the lovely, round arms! Over the whole of that marvellous painting, in which Paolo Veronese seems to have reached the highest point of perfection, there is a glow of eternal youth. The sky, the clouds, the trees, the flowers, the ground, the sea, the carnation, the draperies, all seem flushed with the light of an unknown Elysium. All is warm and fresh like youth, seductive like voluptuousness, calm and pure like strength. There is no mannerism in the care-

fulness, no unhealthiness in the radiant joy. In the presence of that canvas, — this is high praise for Watteau, — I thought of the "Departure for Cythera;" only, you must substitute for the lamps of the Opera the splendid daylight of the East, for the dainty dolls of the Regency in their dresses of ruffled taffeta, superb bodies in which Greek beauty assumes a softer grace under the touch of Venetian voluptuousness, and which yielding and living draperies caress. If I had to choose a unique work in all Veronese's, this is the painting I should prefer. It is the finest gem in his rich casket of jewels.

On the ceiling the great artist has placed his dear Venice upon a golden throne with the rich breadth and the abundant grace of which he knows the secret. When he paints his Assumption, in which Venice takes the place of the Virgin, he always manages to find new azure and new beams.

The magnificent mantelpiece by Aspetti, the stucco cornice by Vittoria and Bombarda, the blue camaieus by Sebastian Rizzi, the pillars of verd antique and cipolin framing in the door complete this wondrous decoration, which is marked by the most beautiful of all luxury, the luxury of genius.

The reception-room or Collegio comes next. Here we find again Tintoretto and Paolo Veronese, the one tawny and violent, the other azure and calm, the former best on great walls, the second on vast ceilings. Tintoretto has painted in this hall "Doge Andrea praying to the Virgin and Child," the "Marriage of Saint Catherine," the "Doge Dona," the "Virgin under at baldacchino," and the "Christ adored by the Doge Luigi Mocenigo." On the other wall Paolo Veronese has represented Christ enthroned, with the personification of Venice by his side; Faith and Angels who hold out palms to Sebastian Venier, who became Doge afterward and won the famous victory over the Turks at Cursolari on Saint Justina's day,— the latter saint figures in the painting,— the famous *proveditore* Agostino Barberigo, who was slain in that battle, and the two figures, on either side, of Saint Sebastian and Saint Justina in grisaille, the one in allusion to the victor's name, the other to the date of the victory.

A magnificent ceiling contains in its compartments the complete deification of Venice by Paolo Veronese, who was particularly fond of this subject. As if this apotheosis did not suffice, Venice again figures above

the window with crown and sceptre in a painting by Carletto Cagliari.

I feel that in spite of myself, the nomenclature grows apace, but at every step I am stayed by a masterpiece. How can I help it? I shall be unable to tell you everything, — let your own imagination work. There are also in the Palace of the Doges three wondrous rooms which I have not even named: The Hall of the Council of Ten, of the Senate, of the Inquisitors of State, and many more. Place the "Apotheosis of Venice" cheek by jowl with the "Assumption of the Virgin" on the ceilings and the walls; make the Doges kneel before the one or the other of these Madonnas, with mythological heroes and gods of fable; place the lion of Saint Mark near the eagle of Jupiter, the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa near Neptune, Pope Alexander III near a short-skirted Allegory; mingle with stories drawn from the Bible and Virgins under baldacchinos, captures of Zara full of remarkable episodes out of a canto in Ariosto, the surprise of Candia, and massacres of Turks; carve the jambs and the lintels of the doors, load the cornices with stucco-work and mouldings, set up statues in every corner, gild everything which has not been

painted by the brush of a great artist; say to yourself: "All those who worked here, even the unknown, had twenty times the talent of the celebrities of our day, and the greatest masters wore their lives out in this place"; — and then you may have a faint idea of splendours which beggar description.

Near the door of one of these halls is still to be seen, though its prestige of terror is lost now that it is reduced to the condition of an unused letter-box, the old Lion's Mouth into which informers cast their denunciations. All that is left is the hole in the wall; the mouth itself has been pulled away. A sombre corridor leads from the Hall of the Inquisitors of State to the Leads and the Wells, which have given rise to so many sentimental declamations. Undoubtedly there can be no fine prisons, but the truth is that the Leads were large rooms covered over with lead, the material generally used in Venice for roofing, and which does not involve any particular cruelty; also, the Wells were in no wise below the level of the Lagoon. I visited two or three of these dungeons. I expected architectural phantasmagoria in the taste of Piranesi, — arches and squat pillars, winding stairs, complex gratings, enormous rings made fast in mon-

strous blocks, narrow slits letting fall a greenish light upon the damp pavement, — and to be admitted by a jailer wearing a foxskin cap with the tail hanging down, and bunches of keys clanking at his girdle. As a matter of fact it was a venerable guide, looking like a Paris janitor, who preceded me, candle in hand, through narrow, dark passageways. The wainscoted cells had a low door and a small opening opposite the lamp hanging from the ceiling of the passageway. A wooden camp bed was in one corner. It was close and dark, but in no wise melodramatic; a philanthropist designing a cell could not have done worse.

On the walls are to be read some of the inscriptions which weary prisoners engrave with a nail on the walls of their tomb: signatures, dates, short sentences drawn from the Bible, philosophical thoughts suitable to the place, a timid aspiration for liberty; sometimes the cause of the imprisonment, as in the inscription which relates that a captive was imprisoned for sacrilege, having given food to a dead man. At the entrance to the corridor I was shown a stone bench on which were seated those who were secretly put to death in the prison. A fine cord passed around the neck and twisted garote fashion strangled them after

the Turkish mode. These clandestine executions occurred only in the case of prisoners of state convicted of political crimes. The deed done, the body was put into a gondola through a door which opens on the Canal della Paglia, and it was thrown overboard with a cannon-ball or a stone tied to the feet in the Orfanello Canal, which was very deep and where fishermen were forbidden to cast their nets. Ordinary assassins were executed between the two pillars at the entrance to the Piazzetta.

The Bridge of Sighs, which as seen from the Ponte della Paglia looks like a cenotaph suspended over the water, is nowise remarkable internally. It is a covered double corridor, separated by a wall, which leads from the Ducal Palace to the prison, a severe, solid piece of work by Antonio da Ponte situated on the other side of the Canal and which looks upon the side façade of the palace supposed to have been built from the designs of Antonio Ricci. The name of Bridge of Sighs given to this tomb which connects two prisons probably arose from the plaints of the unfortunates as they proceeded from their cells to the tribunal or from the tribunal to their cells, broken by torture or driven desperate by condemnation. At night the canal, closed in

by the high walls of the two sombre edifices lighted only by occasional lights, looks most sombre and mysterious, and the gondolas which glide along bearing a couple of lovers, seem to be bound, with a burden, for the Orfanello Canal.

I also visited the former apartments of the Doge, which have lost all their primitive magnificence save an exceedingly ornamental ceiling divided into hexagonal compartments gilded and painted. Within these compartments, concealed by the foliage and the roses, was cut an invisible hole, through which the Inquisitors of State and the members of the Council of Ten could spy at any hour of the day and night what the Doge was doing. The walls, not satisfied with listening through an ear, as in the prison of Dionysius, looked through an open eye, and the Doge, victorious at Zara and Candia, heard, like Angelo, steps in the wall and felt himself mysteriously and jealously watched.

TRAVELS IN ITALY

THE GRAND CANAL

THE Grand Canal is to Venice what the Strand is to London, the Rue Saint-Honoré to Paris, the Calle d'Alcala to Madrid, — the chief artery of the city. It is in the shape of a reversed S, the centre of which cuts into the city in the direction of San Marco, while the upper point ends by the island of Santa Chiara and the lower by the Dogana near the Giudecca Canal. It is cut about the centre by the Rialto.

The Grand Canal at Venice is the most wonderful thing in the world; no other city affords so fair, so strange, so fairylike a prospect. Equally remarkable specimens of architecture may be met with elsewhere, but none under such picturesque conditions. Every palace has a mirror in which it can gaze upon its own beauty; the splendid reality is duplicated by a lovely reflection; the water lovingly laves the feet of these beautiful façades bathed in a golden light and cradles them in a double heaven. The smaller vessels and

The Grand Canal at Venice is the most wonderful thing in the world.

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the larger boats which can ascend the canal seem moored on purpose to fill up the foreground for the greater advantage of scene painters and water-colour painters.

Every wall tells a story, every house is a palace, every palace a masterpiece and a legend. With every stroke of the oar, the gondolier calls out a name which was as well known in crusading days as to-day, and this goes on for more than half a league. The list of palaces would fill up five or six pages. Pietro Lombardi, Vittoria, Sansovino, Sammichelli, the great Veronese architect, Domenico Rossi, Visentini designed and superintended the building of these princely dwellings; to say nothing of the marvellous anonymous artists of the Middle Ages who erected the most picturesque and the most romantic, those which give to Venice its peculiar stamp and individuality.

On both banks follow uninterruptedly façades equally charming and diversely beautiful. Next to a Renaissance building with its superimposed pillars and orders, stands a mediæval palace in the Gothic and Arab style of which the Palace of the Doges is the prototype, with traceried balconies, arches, trefoils, and dentellated acroter; then a façade overlaid with coloured marbles

and adorned with medallions and brackets; then a great rose-coloured wall with a vast pillared window. You meet with every possible variety, — Byzantine, Saracen, Lombard, Gothic, Romanesque, Greek, and even rococo architecture; pillars and columns, Gothic and Roman arches, fantastic capitals full of birds and flowers brought from Acre or Jaffa, or Greek capitals found among Athenian ruins, mosaics and *bassi-relievi*, classic severity and the elegant fancifulness of the Renaissance. It is an immense open-air gallery, in which one can study from a gondola the progress of art during seven or eight centuries. How much genius, talent, and money have been expended in a space traversed in less than an hour! What prodigious artists, and what intelligent and splendid lords! What a pity that the patricians who caused such beautiful palaces to be built should now exist only in the paintings of Titian, Tintoretto, and Moro!

Even before reaching the Rialto there rises on the left as you ascend the canal, the Palazzo Dario in the Lombard-Gothic style of the fifteenth century; the Palazzo Venier, the corner of which shows, with its ornaments, its precious marbles, and its medallions, also in the Lombard style; the Academy of the Fine

Arts, the old Scuola di Santa Maria della Carità, with its classical façade surmounted by a Minerva with a lion; the Palazzo Contarini degli Scrigni, the work of Scamozzi; the Palazzo Rezzonico with its three superimposed orders; the two Palazzi Schiavoni, where lives Natale Schiavoni, a descendant of the famous painter of that name, who has a gallery of paintings and a beautiful daughter, the living reproduction of a canvas painted by her ancestor; the Palazzo Foscari, easily known by its low door with its two stories of slender pillars supporting Gothic arches and trefoils, where formerly lodged the sovereigns who visited Venice, and now deserted; the Palazzo Balbi, on the balcony of which princes leaned to watch the regattas which took place on the Grand Canal with so much brilliancy and magnificence in the heyday of the Republic; the Palazzo Pisani, in the German pointed style of the fourteenth century; and the Palazzo Tiepolo, very stylish and comparatively modern, with its two elegant pyramidions. On the right, close to the Hôtel de l'Europe rises between two tall buildings a lovely palazzino which consists of a window and a balcony, — but what a window, and what a balcony! A lace-work of stone scrolls and

tracery! Farther on, the Palazzo Corner della Cà Grande, built in 1532, one of the best works of Sansovino; the Palazzo Grazzi, now the Hôtel de l'Empereur, the marble staircase of which is adorned with beautiful orange trees in pots; the Palazzo Corner Spinelli; the Palazzo Grimani, a powerful piece of work by Sammichelli, the lower marble course of which is adorned by a double fret of striking effect, — it is now the postoffice; the Palazzo Farsetti, with a pillared peristyle and a long gallery of slender columns running along the whole façade, now occupied by the municipal offices. I might say, as does Don Ruy Gomez de Silva to Charles V in "Hernani," when showing his ancestors' portraits, "I pass many, and of the best." I shall, nevertheless, mention the Palazzo Loredan and the ancient dwelling of Enrico Dandolo, the victor of Constantinople. Between the palaces there are houses equally good, whose chimneys, ending in turrets, turbans, and flower vases, diversify very agreeably the great architectural lines.

Sometimes a *traghetto* (landing) or a *piazzetta* like the Campo San Vitale, for instance, which lies opposite the Academy, makes a pleasant break in this long line of monuments. The Campo, bordered by houses

coloured with a bright, cheerful red, contrasts most happily with the vine leaves of a tavern arbour; that red dash in that line of façades, more or less darkened by time, pleases and rests the eye. You can always find a painter there, palette in hand and paint-box on his knees; and the gondoliers and the handsome girls, whom these rascals always attract, pose naturally, and from being admirers are turned into models.

The Rialto, which is the handsomest bridge in Venice, has a very grand, monumental look. It spans the canal with a single bold, elegant arch. It was built in 1588–1592, when Pasquale Cicogna was Doge, by Antonio da Ponte. It replaced the old wooden drawbridge.

Two rows of shops separated in the centre by an arcaded portico and giving a glimpse of the sky, line the sides of the bridge, which may be crossed by any one of three ways, — the roadway in the centre, and the two outer pavements with their marble balustrades. In the immediate neighbourhood of the Rialto, which is one of the most picturesque points on the Grand Canal, are crowded together the oldest houses in Venice with their flat roofs, on which are planted posts for

awnings, with tall chimneys, portly balconies, stairs with disjointed steps, and great patches of red wash, the broken plaster in which shows the dark walls and the foundations turned green by contact with the water. There is always near the Rialto a mob of boats and gondolas, and stagnant islets of crafts moored and drying their brown sails which are sometimes adorned with a great cross. Shylock, the Jew who hungered for Christian flesh, had his shop on the Rialto, which is honoured by having furnished the setting of a scene to Shakespeare.

On either side of the Rialto are grouped on both banks the Fondaco dei Tedeschi, whose walls, coloured with doubtful tints, suggest frescoes by Titian and Tintoretto like vanishing dreams; the Fish Market, the Grass Market; the Fabbriche Vecchie, erected by Scarpagnino, in 1520, and the Fabbriche Nuove erected by Sansovino in 1535, in a ruinous condition, and in which are installed different government offices. These ruinous Fabbriche, with their red tones and their wondrous shades due to age and neglect, must drive the municipality to despair and cause the deepest joy to painters. Under the arcades swarms a busy, noisy population which ascends and descends, goes and

comes, buys and sells, laughs and shouts. There fresh-caught tunny is sold in red slices, and mussels, oysters, crabs, and prawns are carried away in basketfuls; while under the arch of the bridge, where is constantly heard a sonorous echo, sleep the gondoliers in the shade, awaiting customers.

Still proceeding up the canal, there is seen on the left the Palazzo Corner della Regina, so named from Queen Cornaro. The building, which is by Domenico Rossi, is exceedingly elegant. The sumptuous palace is now the Monte di Pietà, or pawn office.

The Armenian College, which is not far off, is an admirable building by Baldassare de Longhena, of a rich, solid, and imposing architecture. It was formerly the Palazzo Pesaro. On the right rises the Palazzo della Cà d'Oro, one of the loveliest on the Grand Canal. It belongs to Mlle. Taglioni, who has had it restored most intelligently. It is embroidered, dentellated, traceried all over in a Greek, Gothic, barbaric taste, so contrasting, so light, so aerial that it seems to have been made on purpose for the home of a sylph. Mlle. Taglioni has taken pity on these poor, abandoned palaces. She pensions a number of them, which she keeps up out of sheer pity for their beauty. Three or

four were pointed out to me which she has charitably restored.

Now look at these mooring posts painted blue and white with golden *fleurs de lys*. They mean that the former Palazzo Vendramin Calergi has become a semi-royal dwelling. It is the home of Her Highness the Duchess of Berry, and she is certainly better lodged there than in the Marsan Pavilion; for this palace, one of the finest in Venice, is a masterpiece of architecture, and the sculpture is wonderfully fine. There is nothing prettier than the groups of children holding the shields on the arches of the windows. The interior is full of precious marbles. Two porphyry columns, of such wondrous beauty that they alone are worth the cost of the palace, are much admired.

I have not yet spoken of the Palazzo Moncenigo, where dwelt Byron, yet my gondola skirted the marble steps where, her hair blowing wild, her feet in the water, in rain and in storm, the girl of the people, the nobleman's mistress, welcomed him on his return with these tender words: "You great dog of the Madonna! Is this the kind of weather to go to the Lido in?" The Palazzo Barberigo also deserves

mention. I did not see its twenty-two Titians which the Russian consul has under seal, having purchased them for his master, but it still contains some very fine paintings, and the carved and gilded cradle intended for the heir of the noble family,— a cradle which might be turned into a tomb, for the Barberigos, like most of the old Venetian families, are extinct. Of nine hundred patrician families inscribed on the Golden Book, there are scarcely fifty left to-day.

The old Fondaco de' Turchi, so much frequented in the days when Venice held the trade of the East and of India, has two stories of Moorish arches which have fallen in or which are filled up by hovels that have grown there like poisonous mushrooms.

At about the point where opens the Cannaregio are seen traces of the siege and of the Austrian bombardment. Some of the shells fell on the Palazzo Labbia, which was burned, and have marked the unfinished façade of San Geremia. As one draws away from the centre of the city, life diminishes, many windows are closed or boarded over, but that very sadness has a beauty of its own. It is more easily felt by the soul than by the eyes, which are treated constantly to the

most unexpected effects of light and shade of varied fabbriche, which are the more picturesque for their ruined condition, to the perpetual movement of the waters and the blue and rose tint which forms the atmosphere of Venice.

TRAVELS IN ITALY

LIFE IN VENICE

AS I intended to make a prolonged stay in Venice, I took up my abode at the corner of the Campo San Moisè, whence I looked out both on the Square and the Canal. At the back of the Square stood the church of San Moisè, with its flashy and eccentric rococo façade, with its violent and almost savage exaggeration; not the tasteless, soft, old-fashioned rococo that we are accustomed to in France, but a robust, strong, exuberant, inventive, capricious bad taste. The volutes twist like stone flourishes, the brackets jut out unexpectedly, the architraves are broken by deep cuts, carved allegories lean on the pediments of the arches in Michael-Angelesque postures; the statues, with their swollen contours and their manifold draperies, pose in their niches like Hectors or dancing masters; the founder's bust on top of its pedestal is so formidable, with its great moustaches, that it seems to be the very likeness of Don Spavento. Nevertheless, the foliage, close set like the leaves of a

cabbage, the hollowed rock-work, the napkin-like cartouches, the columns with bracelets, the carelessly carved figures, the overlay of extravagant ornamentation, produce a rich and grandiose effect, in spite of good taste offended by every detail, but offended by a vigorous imagination.

This truculent façade is connected by a flying bridge with its tower, a diminutive of the Campanile on the Piazza San Marco. In Italy architects have always been bothered by the bells; they either do not wish to or do not know how to connect them with the main building. They seem to have been influenced in spite of themselves by the pagan temples, and to have looked upon the Gothic steeple as a deformed superfluity, a barbarous excrescence. They have turned it into an isolated tower, a sort of belfry, and apparently ignore the splendid effects of ecclesiastical architecture in the North. This by the way. I shall have more than once to repeat this remark.

The entrance to San Moisè is covered by a heavy portière of *piqué* leather, which, when it is raised, allows a glimpse from the Square of gleams of gilding, of starry tapers in a transparent shadow, and gives passage to warm puffs of incense which mingle with the sounds

of the organ and of the prayers. The campanile has no sinecure. It clangs and chimes the livelong day; in the morning it is the Angelus, then Mass, then vespers, then the evening prayer. Its iron tongue is scarcely ever silent; nothing tires out its bronze lungs.

Close by, separated by a lane as narrow as the narrowest *callejon* in Granada or Constantinople, which leads to the *traghetto* on the Grand Canal, rises in the shadow of the church the presbytery, a sombre façade washed with a faded red tint, pierced with gloomy windows heavily grated, which would strike a dissonant note in this bright Venetian picture did not quantities of wall plants, falling in wild disorder, brighten it up somewhat with their tender green, and a charming Madonna, above a poor-box, smile between two lamps.

The three or four houses opposite contain a baker's shop, a flower shop — the window of which, filled with small pots, shows tulips in bloom and rare plants supported by sticks and provided with scientific labels, — and a general dealer's shop on the corner on the canal side, — all of them whitewashed, diapered with green shutters, rayed with balconies, and surmounted by those turban-topped chimneys which give to Venetian roofs the aspect of a Turkish cemetery.

On one of these balconies appeared very often a signora who, so far as the distance allowed me to judge, was pretty. She was almost always dressed in black and handled her fan with Spanish dexterity. It struck me I had already seen her somewhere. On thinking the matter over, I recollected that it was in Charles Gozzi's "Memoirs."

On the open face of the Square towards the landing-place there is a single-arched marble bridge which spans the canal and connects the Campo with the lane on the opposite bank leading to the Campo San Maurizio. The canal finishes at one end with one of those perspectives with which the views of Venice have made every one familiar: tall houses, rosy above, green below, their tops in the sunshine and their bases in the water, arched windows by the side of modern square windows, chimneys swelling out into the shape of flower pots, long, striped awnings hanging over the balconies, golden or brown tiles, house tops crowned with statues standing white against the sky, landing-posts painted in bright colours, water gleaming in the shade, boats moored, or skimming with their black sides past the marble staircases, producing unexpected effects of light and shadow. This water-colour, life size,

was hung up outside my window on the other side of the canal. At the other end, the canal, again spanned by a bridge, opened out into the Canalezzo and showed a glimpse of the entrance wall of the Dogana di Mare and the bronze Fortune turning in the wind on its golden ball, as well as the rigging of vessels too large to enter the narrow waterways.

Seated under my balcony and puffing Levantine tobacco, I shall now make a sketch of Venetian life. It is morning. The white smoke of the cannon-shot from the frigate which denotes the opening of the port, rises from the lagoon, the angelic salutation clangs from the numerous campaniles in the city. Patrician and middle-class Venice is still sound asleep, but the poor devils who spend the night on staircases, on the steps of palaces, or on the bases of columns, have already left their beds and shaken the night dew from their damp rags. The boatmen at the *traghetti* are washing their gondolas, brushing the cloth and the *felzi*, polishing the iron of their prows, shaking the black leather cushions and the Persian carpet which lies on the floor of their craft, and getting their boats in order, ready for customers.

The heavy craft which bring provisions to the town begin to arrive from Mestre, Fusino, Zuecca, — a sort

of maritime suburb, bordered with buildings on one side and gardens on the other, — from Chioggia, Torcello, and other points on the mainland or the islands. These boats, heaped up with fresh vegetables, grapes, and peaches, leave behind them a delightful odour of greenness which contrasts with the briny smell of the boats laden with tunny, mullets, poulps, oysters, *pidocchi* (mussels), crabs, shell-fish, and other fruits of the sea, as the picturesque Venetian expression has it. Others, bringing wood and coal, stop at the water-gates to deliver their goods, and then resume their peaceful course. Wine is brought, not in barrels as with us, nor in goat-skins as in Spain, but in great open tubs which it dyes with its purple darker than blackberry-juice. The epithet "black," which Homer never fails to add to the word wine, is admirably suited to the wines of Friuli and Istria.

The water which is to fill the cisterns is brought in the same way, for Venice, in spite of its aquatic situation, would die of thirst like Tantalus, for it has not a single spring. Formerly the water was fetched from the Brenta Canal at Fusino; now artesian wells supply most of the cisterns. There is scarcely a *campo* without one. The mouths of these reservoirs, surrounded

by a wall like that of a well, have provided Venetian architects and sculptors with the most delightful motives. Sometimes they turn them into Corinthian capitals open in the centre; sometimes into mouths of monsters, or again, they wind around the tambour of bronze, marble, or stone, bacchanals of children, garlands of flowers and fruit, unfortunately worn away too often by the rubbing of the ropes and the copper pails. These cisterns, filled with sand in which the water remains cool, impart a peculiar appearance to the squares. They are open at certain times, and women come to draw water from them as did the Greek slaves from the fountains of antiquity.

There! two gondolas have run foul of each other. As you see their halberd irons striking, they look like two angry swans picking at each other's feathers. One of the gondoliers did not hear, or heard too late the warning cry, a sort of yell in an unknown jargon. The dispute grows warmer, and the two champions blackguard each other like Homeric heroes before a battle. Standing on the poop, they are brandishing their sweeps. You fancy they are going to brain each other. There is no fear of that; it is much ado about nothing. The "*corpo di Baccho*" and other oaths fly

from one boat to the other; but soon mythological oaths are insufficient. Insult and blasphemy are exchanged with increasing intensity. Calling heaven into their quarrel, they blackguard their respective saints, and it is noticeable that the vituperation becomes more outrageous as the craft get further apart. Soon nothing is heard but hoarse croaks which are lost in the distance.

Now passes an official gondola with the Austrian ensign in the stern, bearing a stiff, cold functionary, his breast covered with decorations, on his way to some inspection; another is carrying around phlegmatic English tourists; a third, slender as a skate, flies mysteriously and discreetly towards the open sea. The hangings of the *felze* pulled down and the blinds drawn up shelter two lovers who are going to lunch together at the Punta di Quintavalle. Another, heavier and broader, bears under its white and blue awning a worthy family going to bathe at the Lido, on the shore whose fine sand still preserves the hoof-prints of Byron's horses.

Now the church opens, and there emerges a red procession bearing a red bier, which is placed in a red gondola, for the mourning colour here is red. The dead is being shipped off to the cemetery situated on an

island on the way to Murano. The priests, the bearers, the candlesticks, and the church ornaments are placed in another gondola, which goes first. Go and sleep, poor dead man, under the salt sand, under the shadow of an iron cross by which the gulls will sweep For a Venetian's bones the mainland would be too heavy a covering.

When any one dies in Venice, there is posted up on his house and upon the neighbouring houses, by way of information, a printed placard giving the name, the age, the birthplace, the cause of death, and a certificate that the dead received the Sacraments, that he died like a good Christian; and asking the faithful to pray for him.

But away with these melancholy thoughts! The wake of the red boat has disappeared. Let us forget it as the wave does, which preserves no marks. It is of life, and not of death that we must think.

On the bridge are coming and going young girls, working girls, shop girls, servants, with a chemise and a skirt under their long shawl. On their necks are rolled up long plaits of the reddish hair so dear to the Venetian painter. I salute from my window these models of Paolo Veronese, who pass by without remem-

bering that they posed three hundred years ago for the "Wedding at Cana." Old women, hooded with the national *baüte*, hasten on to get to Mass in time, for the last stroke is sounding from San Moisè. Austrian soldiers in blue trousers, black boots, and gray tunics walk across the bridge, which sounds under their heavy, regular steps, as they carry to some barracks the wood for the kitchen or the victuals for breakfast. *Illustrissimi*, old ruined nobles, who yet have the grand air, with their clean, worn clothes, are going to Florian's, the meeting-place of the aristocracy, to drink the excellent coffee, the recipe for which was transmitted to Venice by Constantinople, and which is not equalled anywhere else. Elsewhere, perhaps, these ghosts of the past would call forth a smile, but the Venetian people love their nobility, which was always kindly and familiar.

Nothing is done in the ordinary way in this quaint city. The street musical instruments, instead of being carted on the backs of the players, are carried along by water; the grinding organs travel in gondolas. There is one passing now under my balcony, one of those big organs made in Cremona, the home of good violins. Nothing could be more unlike those boxes which make

dogs howl with anguish at the corners of our squares. Drums, triangles, and tambourines transform these into a complete orchestra, to the strains of which dance a number of marionettes contained within the frame. It is like an opera overture wandering around. More than one gondola turns out of its way to enjoy the music longer, and the harmonious craft proceeds, followed by a little dilettante flotilla which traverses the canal in its wake.

Now let us look towards the Square; the picture is no less animated there. The open-air kitchen is working, the stoves are blazing, sending up a smell of smoke and the somewhat disagreeable perfume of hot oil. Stews have an important place in Italian life. Sobriety is a Southern virtue which is usually backed by idleness, and there is very little cooking done in the houses. People buy from these open-air kitchens pastes, cakes, bits of poulp, or fried fish; and many, who do not stand on ceremony, eat their purchases on the spot.

The cook himself is a tall, stout, jolly fellow, a sort of obese Hercules or Palforio, with bright red cheeks, hooked nose, rings in his ears, shining black hair curled in small curls like Astrakhan lamb's wool. He turns around like a king on his throne, having about

him three or four rows of shining stamped copper dishes like antique bucklers hanging from the rails of triremes.

The dealer in pumpkins, a vegetable which Venetians are very fond of, also exhibits his wares in quantities which look like cakes of yellow wax, and which he sells in slices. A young maiden from her window signs to the dealer and drops at the end of a string a basket, in which she hauls up a piece of pumpkin proportionate to the amount of money she sent down. This convenient fashion of marketing is entirely in accord with Venetian laziness.

A group has collected in the centre of the Campo, to which are speedily added all the passers-by and all the idlers who have come from the bridge, and who are proceeding by the lane at the side of the church to the Frezzaria or to the Piazza San Marco, the two most frequented places in Venice. A space left clear in the centre of the group is occupied by a poor wretched beggar wearing a mournful hat, dressed in a lamentable coat and ragged trousers. By his side is a hideous old woman, a sort of witch, as wretchedly clothed as the man. A covered basket is placed on the ground before them. A rough-haired dog, sordid, thin, but with the

intelligent look of an academic animal trained to all sorts of exercises, gazes at the old couple with that human look which a dog has with its master; it seems to be awaiting a sign or an order. The old man gives a command; the dog dashes to the basket and raises one of the sides of the cover with its teeth. It remains in it for a few seconds, then pushing the other side of the cover with its nose, it comes out triumphantly, holding in its mouth a small piece of folded paper which it places at the feet of the woman. It does this several times, and the spectators snatch from each other the papers thus brought from the basket. The dog is drawing numbers for the lottery. Those which it brings out at certain times are bound to win. The gamblers of both sexes, who are very numerous in Venice as in all wretched countries, in which the hope of sudden fortunes won without work acts powerfully upon the imagination, place the greatest trust in the numbers thus fished out by the dog. As I beheld the deep wretchedness and the hungry look of the couple, and the thin flanks of the dog whose numbers were to win so many crowns, I asked myself why these poor devils did not turn to better advantage the means of wealth which they distributed so generously

to others for a few sous. That very natural reflection did not occur to any one. Perhaps the guessers of lottery numbers are like witches, who cannot foretell their own future; clairvoyant for others, they are blind where they themselves are concerned. If it were not so, these two poor wretches would have been greatly to blame for not being millionaires at least.

Venice is full of lottery offices. The winning numbers written upon placards framed in flowers and ribbons in fantastic blue, red, and gold figures, excite the cupidity of the passers-by. At night they are brilliantly lighted with lamps and tapers. The favourite numbers, the numbers which must infallibly win in accordance with the calculations dear to lottery players, are also exhibited with much pomp. Certain gamblers who obstinately stick to these imaginary systems buy them at any cost, and stake, in spite of numerous disappointments, their amounts, which they double or treble in accordance with mathematical progression.

I took a turn in the Public Gardens, a great place planted with trees and making a sort of obtuse angle in the scene, the point ending in a hillock on which is a café frequented by travelling musicians. Children

and young girls amuse themselves rolling down the gentle slope covered with fine grass.

The sight ranges over the lagoon. One sees Murano, the island of glass-makers; San Servolo with its lunatic hospital, and the low line of the Lido with its sand-hills, its taverns, and its polled trees. Rows of posts indicating the depth of the water, form lanes in this shallow sea on which float masses of seaweed. The prospect is enlivened by the continual coming and going of sails and boats.

The Public Gardens on fête days contain the loveliest collection of Venetian beauties. It is there that one can study the Venetian type which Gozzi describes as *biondo, bianco e grassoto.*

Necessarily the presence of the Austrians must have modified the Venetian type, although marriages are rare on account of national antipathy; but one still meets with the models of Giovanni Bellini, Giorgione, Titian, and Veronese.

The young girls walk about in groups of two or three, almost all bareheaded, wearing with much taste their splendid fair or brown hair. The dark meridional type is rather rare among women in Venice, although frequent among men. I had already noticed

that fact in Spain at Valencia, where the men have black hair, olive complexions, with the tanned, wan look of a tribe of African Bedouins, while the women are as fair, fresh, and rosy as Lancashire farmer girls.

I saw a great many lovely faces, but though I remember them very well, it would be difficult to reproduce them without a pencil. I shall merely try to suggest the general features. The lines of the face, without being as perfect as those of the Greeks, which are of almost architectural regularity and which are the very type of beauty, have nevertheless a rhythm lacking in Northern faces, which are more worn by thought and the numberless troubles of civilisation. The nose is neater and cleaner in form than Northern noses, which are always marked by something unexpected and capricious. The eyes, too, have that shining placidity which is unknown with us and which recalls the clear, quiet glance of an animal. They are very often black in spite of the fair colour of the hair. On the lips is seen that *smorfia*, a sort of disdainful smile very provoking and charming, which imparts so much character to the heads of the Italian masters.

The Venetians have most lovely necks and shoulders. Nothing can be imagined more beautiful or

more finely rounded. The necks partake at once of the swan and the dove as they bend and swell; and all sorts of wild hair in rebellious curls escaped from the comb, play on them with changes of light, flashes of sunshine, effects of shadow which would delight a painter. After taking a walk in the Public Gardens one is no longer surprised at the golden splendour of the Venetian school. What had been taken for a dream of art is often but the imperfect reproduction of reality.

GONDOLIERS AND SUNSETS

ON my way back to the Piazzetta I saw some young gentlemen as fond of aquatic prowess as our Parisian club men, driving their gondolas at full speed against the quay wall. When they were within a few inches of the stone revetment, they stopped their craft short by a sudden stroke of the oar. This sport is graceful and exciting. When you see the gondola flying so fast, you are sure that it will be smashed to pieces, but that never occurs, and the fun begins all over again. It is in the same way that Turkish and Arab riders send their horses at full gallop against a wall and pull them up on all fours, making the immobility of repose follow upon the rush of speed. The ancient Venetians may have seen these equestrian fantasias in the Atmeidan at Constantinople and adopted them for use in their own country, where the horse is, so to speak, a chimerical creature. More than one young patrician even now puts on the traditional jacket, cap, and sash, and drives his own gon-

dola himself with great skill. Strangers also are fond of doing so, especially the English, who are a nautical people.

There are lovely sunsets in Paris. When you leave the Tuileries by the Place de la Concorde, as you turn towards the Champs-Élysées, it is difficult not to be dazzled by the magnificent spectacle: the masses of trees, and the Egyptian obelisk, the wonderful prospect of the great avenue, the magnificent arch which opens on space, form a splendid setting for the orb which expires in splendour more brilliant to our eyes than that of day. But there is something finer still, and that is a sunset at Venice when you are coming from the Lido, Quintavalle, or the Public Gardens.

The lines of houses of the Giudecca, broken by the dome of San Redentore; the point of the Dogana di Mare with its square tower; the two domes of Santa Maria della Salute, form a marvellous sky line which stands out boldly as the background of the picture. The island of San Giorgio Maggiore, nearer us, sets it off with its church, its dome and brick campanile, — a diminutive of the greater Campanile which is seen on the right, above the old Library and the Palace of the Doges. All these buildings bathed in shadow, for the

light is behind them, are of azure, lilac, and violet tones, on which stands out black the rigging of the vessels at anchor. Above them is a conflagration of splendour, an outburst of beams. The sun sinks in masses of topaz, rubies, amethysts, which the wind changes incessantly as it alters the forms of the clouds. Brilliant rays spring between the two cupolas of the Salute. Sometimes, according to the point of view, Palladio's belfry cuts in two the orb of the sun.

This is all very beautiful, but the wondrous spectacle is made finer by being repeated in the water. The sunset has the Lagoon for a mirror. All the light, all the rays, all the fire, all the phosphorescence, ripple over the waves in sparks, spangles, prisms, and trails of flame, shining, scintillating, flaming, swarming luminously. The tower of San Giorgio Maggiore, with its opaque shadow stretching afar, shows black against the conflagration, which increases its height in the strangest fashion and makes it seem as if its base were within an abyss. The outlines of buildings appear to float between two heavens or between two seas. Is it the water which reflects the sky, or the sky which reflects the water? The eye hesitates, and all is confounded in one vast dazzling splendour.

GONDOLIERS AND SUNSETS

I was landed at the *traghetto della Piazzetta* in the midst of a rout of gondolas, and I went on to the Piazza through the arcades of the Old Library of Sansovino, now the Viceroy's palace.

It is on the Piazza at about eight in the evening that life in Venice reaches its maximum of intensity. It is impossible to see anything more cheerful, lively, and amusing. The setting sun lights up with the most brilliant rosy red the façade of San Marco, which seems to blush with pleasure and to sparkle radiantly under the dying beams. A few late pigeons fly back to the cornices or the gables, where they will sleep until morning, their heads under their wings.

The Piazza is lined with cafés, like the Palais Royal in Paris, which it resembles in more than one respect. These cafés are in no wise remarkable from the point of view of their decoration, especially if they are compared with the splendid establishments of the kind which Paris possesses. They consist simply of very plain rooms, rather low-ceiled, in which no one ever sits except in the worst winter days. Coffee, which is excellent in Venice, is served on copper trays, with a glass of water which the Venetians spend hours in drinking. Ices and iced drinks are noticeable only for

their low price, and are far from equalling the exquisite, refined Spanish iced drinks. The only special thing I found was a grape sherbet, very cool and tasty.

The customers sit under the arcades or on the Piazzetta itself, on which are placed before each café wooden benches and tables. Formerly tents and striped awnings were raised in the centre of the Square; that picturesque custom has vanished. Striped blinds are also becoming rare. They are too often replaced by hideous strips of blue cloth very much like cooks' aprons. Civilised people say they are less showy and in better taste.

Very trig and free and easy looking flower-girls swarm on the Square and amuse passers-by and customers with their pretty requests. When you refuse to buy, they laughingly give you a small bunch and run away. It is not customary to pay them at once, it would be rude, but from time to time you give them a small coin by way of a gift. The flower-girls are followed by vendors of iced fruits who shout, "Caramel! caramel!" in deafening fashion. Their stock consists of candied grapes, figs, pears, and prunes, which they carry in baskets.

Venetian women of the upper class are most de-

lightfully indolent and lazy. They have forgotten how to walk, through using the gondola. Even in this fine climate, it takes an uncommon combination of circumstances to induce them to venture forth. The sirocco, sunshine, a threatening shower, or a too fresh sea-breeze are sufficient to make them stay at home. The greatest exercise they take is going from their sofa to the balcony to breathe the perfume of the great flowers which bloom so splendidly in the moist, warm air of Venice. Their idle and confined life gives them an indescribably delicate, mat, white complexion.

If by chance the weather is exceptionally fine, a few of them may walk two or three times around the Piazza San Marco, when the band is playing in the evening, and they rest long in front of the Café Florian in company with their husbands, brothers, or *cavaliere servente*.

Formerly Levantines were very numerous in Venice. Their pelisses, their dolmans, their full coats of bright colours showed picturesquely among the crowd which they traversed impassible and grave. They are not so frequently met with now that commerce has been largely transferred to Trieste, but Greeks are often met, with their caps the blue silk

tassel of which falls upon the shoulders, their temples shaved, their hair falling behind, their characteristic features and their handsome national dress, which contrasts strikingly with the hideous modern costume. These Greeks, who, most of them, are only merchants, or skippers of Zante, Corfu, Cyprus, or Syra vessels, have a remarkably majestic port, and the nobility of their antique race is imprinted on their features as on a golden book. They repair in groups of three or four to the corner of the Piazza, to the Costanza Café, which enjoys the monopoly of supplying the children of the Levant with coffee and pipes.

Around the cafés wander street musicians, who perform operatic selections, and tenors singing Lucia or some other air of Donizetti with the rich voices and the admirable, instinctive Italian facility which so closely imitates talent that one may be deceived by it. Chinese marionettes, which differ from ours in that the background of the picture is black and the figures are white, show swiftly one after another under the canvas awning. A group forms in the centre of the square. The tenor is but little listened to, the Chinese marionettes are deserted by the spectators, the caramel sellers cease their monot-

onous cry, chairs are turned half around, everybody is silent. The desks have been arranged, the music distributed, the military band arrives, the prelude is heard, and they begin. It is the overture to "William Tell." The overture over, the crowd withdraws. Soon there are only a few people walking about, and *birrichini*, a sort of ruffians whose most honest business is selling smuggled cigars. Though you may still read in the accounts of modern travellers that night is turned into day in Venice, it is none the less true that by midnight the Piazza is deserted, but this will not prevent tourists, on the faith of old accounts which refer to customs fallen into desuetude since the fall of the Republic, from repeating for the next fifty years that the Piazza San Marco swarms with people until daylight. That was true enough when the apartments above the arcades of the Procuratie Vecchie and Nuove were occupied by gamblers and casinos, in which crowded all night a company of nobles, adventurers, and courtesans, — a perpetual carnival in which nothing was lacking, not even the mask, and of which Casanova de Seingalt has given such interesting descriptions in his "Memoirs."

The offices of the brokers, the shops in which are

sold the Murano glass-ware, shell and coral necklaces, and models of gondolas, those which sell views, maps, and engravings of Venice, had closed one after another. The only places left open were the cafés and the tobacco shops.

It was time to get back to my gondola, which was waiting for me at the Piazzetta landing. The moon had arisen, and nothing is more delightful than an excursion by moonlight along the Grand Canal or the Giudecca. It is a romantic situation which an enthusiastic traveller cannot omit on a beautiful, bright August night. I had another reason for wandering on the lagoon at a time when it would have been wiser to vanish within my mosquito net. Who has not heard of the gondoliers singing the *ottavi* of Tasso, and barcarolles in the Venetian dialect, so lisping and broken that it resembles a child's first attempts? The gondoliers have long since ceased to sing, and yet the tradition is not quite lost; the older men do preserve within their memories some episodes of "Jerusalem Delivered," which they are willing enough to recollect in return for a heavy tip and a few jars of Cyprus wine. Like the maidens of Ischia who put on their beautiful Greek costumes for Eng-

lishmen alone, the gondoliers will sing their melodies only when well paid for doing so.

When we had got some distance out in the great Canal of the Giudecca, which is almost an arm of the sea, about opposite the Jesuit church, the white façade of which was silvered by the moon, my gondolier, after having wetted his whistle, sang in a guttural, deep, somewhat hoarse voice, but which was heard a long way over the water, with prolonged cadences, "La Biondina in Gondoletta," "Pronta la Gondoletta," and the episode of "Erminia among the Shepherds."

I had committed the mistake of bringing my singer with me instead of putting him in a boat at a distance and listening to him from the shore, for the music is pleasanter farther away than near, but being more of a poet than a musician, I wanted to hear the lines.

THE ARSENAL—FUSINE

IT was fine, and the fancy took me, on seeing the beautiful sky, to go to breakfast at Franco Porto on the Island of San Giorgio Maggiore; turning the opportunity to account to visit Palladio's beautiful church, the red belfry of which shows to such advantage against the lagoon. The façade has been somewhat retouched by Scamozzi. The interior contains, besides the inevitable huge paintings by Tintoretto,—the robust artist who painted acres of masterpieces,—columns of Greek marble, gilded altars, stone and bronze statues, an admirable choir in carved woodwork representing different scenes in the life of Saint Benedict, which recalled to me the wonderful wood carvings by Berruguete in the Spanish cathedrals. A pretty bronze statuette, placed on the choir rail on the right as you enter, represents Saint George, and is remarkable as being the most admirable likeness ever made of Lord Byron. This anticipated, and as it were, prophetical portrait struck me greatly. The

head of the Greek saint is the most elegant, disdainful, aristocratic, thoroughly English that it is possible to conceive; even the lips are contracted by the sneer of the author of "Don Juan." I do not know whether the noble lord, who lived in Venice for a long time and who must have visited the church of San Giorgio Maggiore, noticed as I did that unique resemblance, which must certainly have flattered him.

Behind the church, which is built on the point of the island looking towards the Piazzetta and where the Austrians have established a battery of guns, stretch the warehouses and basins of the Franco Porto. You traverse, after having passed through a gate guarded by custom-house inspectors, great courts surrounded by high arcades, and reach a sort of tavern and *osteria*, the *rendez-vous* of sailors and gondoliers, who there enjoy the pleasure of drinking wine duty free, very much as our Paris workmen go and get drunk outside the city. The place is always filled with people, and the customers overflow outside on benches around wooden tables shaded by the church. Porters pushing hand-carts loaded with bales move in and out among the drinkers, whom they look at enviously, and by whom they will come and sit down when they have earned

the few sous needed for their frugal orgies. Opposite the tavern a great empty warehouse looking like a casemate, whitewashed, with grated windows looking out upon a deserted lane, serves as a refuge to people who are troubled by the somewhat noisy gaiety outside, and lovers who seek solitude.

There you are served with Adriatic *trigli* (mullets) so appetising, so golden red, so bright, so brilliant in tone that you would eat them simply on account of their colour, even were they not the very best fish in the world. Peaches, grapes, a jar of Cyprus wine, and coffee compose a breakfast exquisite in its simplicity, and if by chance you have a good Havana cigar which you can smoke in your gondola as you return towards the Riva degli Schiavoni, I do not quite see what more you want in order to be happy, especially if the night before you have received satisfactory letters from home.

It is early, and before going to Fusine I shall have time to visit the Arsenal; not the interior, for that is now forbidden, but I am more interested in admiring the Lions of the Piræus, trophies won by Morosini during the Peloponnesian War, than vessels in process of building and endless rows of guns.

The two colossi in Pentelic marble lack the zoölogical truthfulness which Barye would undoubtedly have imparted to them, but there is something so proud, so grandiose, so divine, — if one may say so of animals, — about them that they produce a striking impression. Their golden whiteness stands out admirably against the red façade of the Arsenal, which is composed of a portico covered with meritorious statues which the nearness of the splendid lions causes to look like dolls, and of two crenellated towers of red brick with bands of stone like the houses of the Place Royale in Paris. Though they are trophies of a defeat, they still preserve their haughty, superb, proud look, and these lions seem to remember in the City of Saint Mark the antique Minerva.

The gloomy loneliness of the Arsenal, with its vast basins, its covered building-sheds, in which it is said a galley could be built, rigged, equipped, and launched in one day, recalled to me the Arsenal at Cartagena in Spain, which was so active in the days of the invincible Armada. It was from this Venetian Arsenal that started the fleets that went to conquer Corfu, Zante, Cyprus, Athens, and all the rich, fair islands of the Archipelago; but Venice was Venice then, and the

Lion of Saint Mark, now gloomy and defamed, had teeth and claws like the fiercest of heraldic monsters.

We passed between San Giorgio and the Giudecca Point, skirting closely its gardens and enclosures full of vines and fruit trees, and entered the lagoon properly so-called.

The sky was absolutely clear, and the light was so brilliant that the water shone like a sea of silver and the sky line was absolutely invisible. The islands showed like little brown spots, and distant craft seemed to sail in mid-heaven. The railway bridge, a gigantic work which links Venice with the mainland and which I saw far off on the right, offered a singular effect of mirage. Its numerous arches, repeated in the still, blue water, formed perfect circles and resembled those strange, round Chinese doors which are seen upon screens; so that the architectural fancy of Pekin seemed to have built this quaint avenue for the city of the Doges, the sky line of which, broken by numerous belfries and topped by the Campanile surmounted with its golden angel, showed in the most picturesque and unexpected fashion.

After having passed a fortified island, bearing on its summit a charming statue of the Madonna and a very

ugly Austrian sentry, I followed one of the canals in the lagoon buoyed by a double row of poles which mark the places where the water is sufficiently deep; for the lagoon is a sort of salt marsh which the ebb and flow of the tide prevent from stagnating, but which is never more than three or four feet deep except along certain lines deepened by nature or by man. Some of the piles have at the top little miniature diptychs made by pious sailors, which contain images and statues of the Madonna. The gracious protectress, who is called in the litanies *Stella Maris*, Star of the Sea, is there in her element. These Madonnas in the water are touching. Undoubtedly the Deity is present everywhere, and His protection falls from heaven as quickly as it rises from the sea, but the pious belief in a more immediate succour, the protectress being transported into the very midst of the peril, has something childishly charming and poetic about it. I am very fond of these Venetian Madonnas, washed by the salt mists and struck by the wing of the passing gull, and I willingly say, as I pass them, "*Ave, Maria, gratia plena!*"

The blue line of the Euganean Mountains showed faintly ahead against the tender blue of the sky, rather as a vein of deeper azure than a terrestrial reality.

The trees and houses on the shore, which I could already perceive, seemed on account of the curve of the sea to plunge half-way into the water, and the red campaniles on the islands appeared to spring from the wave like great branches of coral. A low shore covered with varied vegetation lay before me. I sprang out of the gondola; I had reached Fusine.

The ravages of the war had not been repaired at Fusine. Some of the houses, half ruined by cannon-balls, smashed by shells, spoiled, with their broken white walls, amid the luxuriant vegetation, looked like bones forgotten on a battlefield. A little rustic chapel is intact, either because it was respected during the fight, or because the dwelling of God was restored before that of men. The rich, damp soil, impregnated with marine salts, enriched with vegetable detritus, heated by the vivifying sunshine, has given birth in loneliness and solitude to a whole wild flora of those lovely plants which are called weeds because they are free. It is a virgin forest on a small scale. Wild oats wave on the edge of the ditches, the hemlock expands its umbellæ of greenish white, the wild mallow spreads its curled leaves and its pale-rose flowers, the wild convolvulus clings with its silver bells to the branches of brambles;

the grass, which comes up to your knees, is diapered with innumerable unnamed flowers, little spangles of gold, azure, or purple cast here and there by the great colourist to break the uniform green tint. By the banks of the canals the water-lily displays its great viscous, heart-shaped leaves and its yellow flowers, the spear-head of the sagittaria trembles in the breeze, the loosestrife, with its willow-like leaf, bends under the weight of its purple spikes, the iris sends up its dagger-like leaf; the ribboned reeds, the flowering rushes, are mingled in the wildest and most picturesque disorder. Elders, hazels, shrubs, and trees which no one trims, cast a shadow flecked with sunshine over this rich mass.

Quick, swift lizards with quivering tails traverse like arrows the narrow path where the tree-frog conceals itself in the rut full of rain water. Bands of frogs dive under the grasses of the Brenta as you pass by. A beautiful water-snake fearlessly indulges in the most graceful convolutions.

Weirs and locks, forming breaks in the scene, retain the water here and there; light brick arches, which serve the double purpose of counterforts and of bridges, frequently span the canal; but all is half ruinous, and

invaded by the vegetation which slips into the place of the bricks or the stone. This neglect is regrettable from the point of view of the engineer, but from that of the painter it is quite otherwise. If moss cover the revetments, if wall plants disjoin the stones, if the reeds end by filling up the canals, it all looks well in the landscape.

On returning, the gondolier took me through water-lanes with which I was not previously acquainted. Decaying cities are like dying bodies; life, confined to the heart, little by little deserts the extremities. Streets become depopulated, old quarters become solitary, the blood lacks the strength to flow through the veins. The entrance to Venice, coming from Fusine, is mournful. Only a few boats bringing goods from the mainland glide slowly over the sleeping waters by the side of the deserted houses. Palaces of exquisite architecture are windowless; the openings are closed by rough boards. The whitewash on the abandoned houses chips away, the moss spreads its green carpet over the substructures, shells and seaweed cling to the water-steps which crabs alone now ascend. At the windows of the few inhabited houses are rags hung out to dry, sole indication of the life of the wretched

households which have taken refuge there. Occasionally a magnificently wrought iron grating, a balcony with complicated ornamentation, a broken coat of arms, slender marble columns, a mask, a sculptured cornice on a wall cracked, blackened, and guttered by the rain, degraded by carelessness, betoken former splendour and mark the palace of a patrician family which has died out or sunk into poverty. As one proceeds the painful impression is gradually removed, life is renewed, and it is with pleasure that one enters again upon the animated Grand Canal or the Piazza San Marco.

Time had seemed short to me at Fusine; it was already the dinner hour. The crabs which swarm in the canals were beginning to show their ugly bodies and their crooked claws above the line traced by the water at the foot of the houses; a performance which they go through every evening at six o'clock as punctually as if regulated by a chronometer.

I dined that day at the Campo San Gallo, a square behind the Piazza in a German *gasthoff*, where I enjoyed the change from the *vini nostrani* to a glass of Münich beer. I dined there in the open air under an awning striped saffron and white, side by side with

French painters, German artists, and Austrian officers; the latter short, fair, slender young fellows in close-fitting, elegant uniforms, very polite, very well-bred, with Werther-like faces and quite free from soldierly manners. The conversation was usually æsthetic, broken here and there by a complicated, laborious joke, a remembrance of Jena, Bonn, or Heidelberg.

In the centre of the Campo rose the margin of a well where the women of the neighbourhood and the Styrian water-carriers came to draw water at certain hours. At the back was a little church bearing the arms of the Patriarch of Venice, the door of which, closed by a curtain, sent out a faint perfume of incense to mingle with the smells from the *gasthoff* kitchen, and from which the sound of prayer and of organ notes mingled with discussions on art and philosophy. From time to time some bat-like old women, their heads concealed within black hoods, vanished within after raising the portière.

Young girls, bareheaded and draped in brilliant shawls, passed by, fan in hand, smile on lip, brushing gently aside with their feet the festooned flounces of their skirts, and instead of entering the church, went into a narrow lane which leads from the Campo San

Gallo to the Piazza. There passed by also stout priests with honest, jolly faces, going to some evening service. They wore purple stockings like bishops, and red shoes like cardinals, which, it is said, is a privilege of the Quarter San Marco, the patriarchal metropolis.

On a modest-looking house opposite the *gasthoff* was a slab in marble bearing a Latin inscription. It was there that Canova died. I cannot resist the pleasure of copying the beautiful and touching inscription, which may be translated thus for the benefit of ladies who do not know Latin, and of men who have forgotten it: "This house of the Francesconi, which he had preferred to more sumptuous hospitality because of the candour of a former friendship, Canova, easily prince of sculptors, consecrated with his last breath."

After I had despatched my modest repast, seeing nothing interesting on the theatre posters which covered the arcades of the Procuratie, I traversed the streets aimlessly, which is the best way to become acquainted with the familiar life of a people; for books speak scarcely of anything but monuments and remarkable things, leaving out all the characteristic details and the innumerable, almost imperceptible differences which remind you constantly that you are in a foreign land.

THE ACADEMY

AT the entrance to the Grand Canal, by the side of the white church della Salute and opposite the red houses of the Campo di San Vitale — a point of view made illustrious by Canaletto's masterpiece — rises the Academia di Belle Arti, where, thanks to the late Count Leopoldo Cicognara, have been collected a large number of the treasures of the Venetian School. The arcaded façade is from the design of Giorgio Massari, and the sculptor Giacarelli is the author of the "Minerva seated upon a Lion," which decorates the attic.

When the Venetian School is spoken of three names at once recur to the mind: Titian, Paolo Veronese, and Tintoretto. They seem to have been born spontaneously, like flowers, of the azure of the sea under a warm beam of sunshine. By the side of them one puts Giovanni Bellini and Giorgione, and that is all. I am speaking of the public and of ordinary amateurs who have not seen Italy, and who have not made a

special study of Venetian painting. Yet there exists a whole series of artists, almost unknown, but admirable, who preceded the great men whom I have mentioned, as dawn precedes day, less brilliant, but more tender and fresher. These older Venetians join to all the artless delicacy, all the unction, all the suavity of Giotto, Perugino, and Hemling, an elegance, a beauty, and a richness of colouring which these never attained. It is remarkable that the paintings of the school of colourists have almost all turned black; the harmony of the tints has disappeared under smoky varnish, the *glacis* is faded, the first sketch shows through the overlaying; while the works of the school of line painters, with their timid and minute methods, their lack of thick colouring, their very simple local tone, preserve incomparable brilliancy and youth. These panels and canvases, anterior often by as much as a hundred years to the famous paintings, seem, but for the style which indicates the date, to have been painted yesterday. They still possess the bloom of novelty; the ages have passed over them without leaving any trace. There is no retouching, no re-painting about them. Is it because the colours used by these men were purer, chemistry not being then sufficiently developed to adulterate them

or to invent other colours of uncertain effect and doubtful permanence? Or is it that the tones, left almost pure, as in illuminations, have preserved the same value as on the palette. I will not attempt to decide the question, but the fact, more marked here, is true of all schools which preceded what is called the Renaissance of art. The older a painting is, the better it is preserved. A Van Eyck is fresher than a Van Dyck, an Andrea Mantegna than a Raphael, and an Antonio de Murano than a Tintoretto. Frescoes exhibit the same difference; the most modern are the most damaged.

I was prepared, in a way, by the masterpieces scattered through the galleries of France, Spain, England, Belgium, and Holland, for the marvels of Titian, Paolo Veronese, and Tintoretto, nor did these great men disappoint me. They faithfully kept all the promise of their genius, — but I expected that. On the other hand I experienced a delightful surprise on beholding the works, little known outside of Venice, of Giovanni and Gentile Bellini, Basaiti, Marco Roccone, Mansueti, Carpaccio, and others whose names would make a catalogue were I to give them. It was like a new world. To find Venetian brilliancy in Gothic simplicity, the beauty of the South allied to the somewhat stiff forms

of the North, Holbeins as richly coloured as if painted by Giorgione, paintings by Lucas Cranach as elegant as those of Raphael, was a wondrous piece of good fortune, and I felt it perhaps more than was proper; for in my first burst of enthusiasm I was not far from considering the illustrious masters, the eternal glories of the Venetian School, as corrupters of taste and great men of the decadence, — somewhat like those Neo-Christian Germans, who drive Raphael from the paradise of Catholic painters because, in their opinion, he is too sensual and too pagan.

If I were writing a history of Venetian painting and not an account of a trip, I should begin by Nicolo Semiticolo, the oldest in the series, who goes back to 1370, and I should come down chronologically to Francesco Zuccarelli, the last of them, who died in 1790; but the gallery is not so arranged, and this system, which should be followed everywhere, would not agree with the real places occupied by the pictures, which are hung up simply in accordance with their size.

The Academy of the Fine Arts, as is well known, occupies the old Scuola di Santa Maria della Carità. Of the original decoration there remains a very hand-

some ceiling in the first hall, which is the *Salon Carré*, the *Tribuna* of the Academy of Fine Arts. It is a casket in which the finest gems are placed in the most favourable light; the Koh-i-noors, the Grand Moguls, the Regents, and the Sancys of this rich Venetian mine, the veins of which have furnished such precious, picturesque gems.

Each great master of Venice is represented here by an eminent example of his talent, the masterpiece of his masterpieces, — one of those supreme paintings in which genius and talent, inspiration and skill are mingled in proportions not easy to recover, a rare conjunction even in the life of sovereign artists. On that day the hand could do whatever the mind willed, as in that place of which Dante speaks, "where one can what one wills."

Basaiti's "Calling of the Sons of Zebedee" has many of the characteristics of the German School in the artlessness of the details, in the somewhat gray softness of tone, and in a certain melancholy unusual in the Italian School. The Nuremberg master would not disavow the landscape, at once fantastic and real, the Gothic castles with their pepper-pot turrets, their drawbridges and barbicans on the banks of the Lake

of Tiberias, and a Chioggia or Murazzi fisherman would have no fault to find with the *Péote* and the nets rendered so simply and faithfully. The Christ is earnest and suave; the faces of the two apostles who are going to give up the catching of fish for the catching of men breathe the liveliest faith.

A stop must be made also before the "Saint Francis receiving the Stigmata," by Francesco Beccarucci di Conegliano, which is very fine. The painting is divided into two parts. In the upper is seen the saint holding out his hands for the divine imprints, a glorious resemblance with the Saviour which he has earned through his devotion. In the lower part is a crowd of saints and blessed, for the most part belonging to the order of Saint Francis, and rejoicing in the miracle. It contains beautiful ascetic heads; it is filled with deep religious feeling, and is perfect though somewhat dry in execution. When these old paintings, apparently cold and constrained, are looked at attentively, they become animated little by little, and finally exhibit extraordinary vivacity; yet they are marked neither by much knowledge of anatomy nor by much muscular or fleshy development. The figures, embarrassed, look like timid people who wish to speak to you and dare

not, and are turning over the best way to express what they feel. Their gestures are often awkward, but their faces are so kindly, so sweet, so childishly sincere, that you understand their half-spoken words, and they remain forever in your memory. It is because, under their awkward appearance, they possess a small thing which is lacking in masterpieces of technical skill, — a soul.

I own frankly that I have a horror of the Bassanos. Their everlasting paintings of animals turned out from their factory and scattered throughout Europe, wretched shoddy work reproduced mechanically, more than justify my aversion; but I am bound to confess that the "Resurrection of Lazarus" by Leandro Bassano is worth a good deal more than the entrances and exits from the Ark, the pastorals and the rustic parks with cattle and sheep and a bending woman in a red skirt, which drive to despair every visitor to picture galleries.

Let me mention also the "Wedding of Cana" by Padovanino, a large, fine composition, broad and correct in execution, a painting praiseworthy in every respect, and which anywhere else would be accounted a masterpiece; and let me come to a curious painting by Paris Bordone, which represents a gondolier

restoring the ring of Saint Mark to the Doge. The moment chosen is that at which the gondolier is kneeling before the Doge. The composition is very picturesque. There is a great line, in perspective, of heads of senators, dark or bearded, most lordly in character; spectators are crowding on the steps in skilfully contrasted groups, while the beautiful Venetian costume is seen in all its splendour. As in nearly all the paintings of this school, architecture has a large place in the picture. Beautiful porticos in the style of Palladio, filled with people coming and going, form the background. This painting has the peculiarity, rather infrequent in the Italian school, — which is mostly occupied in reproducing religious or mythological subjects, — of representing a popular legend, a scene of manners, a romantic subject, in a word, such as Delacroix or Louis Boulanger might have chosen and treated in accordance with their talent. This gives it a characteristic appearance and a personal attractiveness.

The pearl of the Museum at Madrid is a Raphael; the gem of the Museum at Venice is a Titian, a marvellous painting, long forgotten and then recovered, for Venice possessed this masterpiece unawares for

many a year. Relegated to an old and little frequented church, it had disappeared under the slow accumulation of dust and cobwebs; the subject itself could scarcely be made out. One day an expert connoisseur, Count Cicognara, was struck with the appearance of the darkened figures, and suspecting the hand of the master under the marks of neglect and wretchedness, rubbed a corner of the canvas. The noble painting, preserved intact under the layer of dust like Pompeii under its mantle of ashes, appeared so youthful and so fresh that the Count was certain that he had come across a work by a great master, — an unknown masterpiece. He managed to master his feelings and proposed to the priest to exchange that huge, uncared-for painting for a fine, brand-new, clean, shining picture handsomely framed, which would do honour to the church and please the faithful. The priest joyfully accepted, smiling to himself at the eccentricity of the Count, who was giving a new picture for an old one and did not ask something into the bargain.

Cleansed from the filth which soiled it, Titian's "Assumption" appeared radiant. It is one of the largest paintings by the master, and the one in which

he has reached the highest point. The composition is balanced and distributed with infinite art. The upper portion, which is arched, represents Paradise, — the Glory, to use the ascetic Spanish expression. Groups of angels confounded and disappearing in a flood of light to incalculable depths, like sparkling stars against flame, brilliant gleams of eternal light, form a halo around God the Father, who issues from the depths of the Infinite with the motion of a soaring eagle, accompanied by an archangel and a seraph upholding the crown and the nimbus. This figure of Jehovah, seen head and body strongly foreshortened horizontally, like a divine bird, with a mass of flying drapery outspread like wings, amazes by its sublime boldness. If it be possible for a human brush to clothe the Deity in a human figure, undoubtedly Titian has succeeded in doing so. Almighty power, eternal youth shine on the white-bearded face. Since the Olympic Jupiter of Phidias, never has the Lord of Heaven and Earth been more worthily represented.

The centre of the picture is occupied by the Virgin Mary, who is raised, or rather surrounded, by a band of angels and of souls of the blessed. She needs no help to ascend to heaven. She rises through the

upspringing of her robust faith, the purity of her soul, lighter than the most luminous ether. There is positively in that figure an incredible power of ascension; and yet to attain that effect, Titian did not have recourse to slender form, to clinging draperies, to transparent colour. His Madonna is a very real, a very living woman, of a beauty as solid as that of the Venus of Milo or the Venus of the Tribuna at Florence; full, rich draperies with numerous folds float around her; and yet nothing is more celestially beautiful than that tall, strong figure with its rose-coloured tunic and its azure mantle. In spite of the mighty voluptuousness of the body, the glance shines with the purest virginity.

In the lower part of the painting the Apostles are grouped in various skilfully contrasted attitudes of ecstasy and surprise. Two or three small angels, who connect them with the middle portion of the composition, seem to be explaining the miracle. The heads of the Apostles, of various ages and characters, are painted with surprising vigour and lifelike reality. The draperies have the breadth and fulness characteristic of Titian, who was at once the richest and the simplest of painters.

As I looked at that Virgin and compared it in my mind with other Virgins by different masters, I reflected how marvellous, how ever new a thing is art. The number of variations which Catholic painters have made upon this theme of the Madonna, without ever exhausting it, astounds and confounds the imagination; but when one reflects upon it, one understands that under the conventional type each painter has reproduced at one and the same time his dream of love and the incarnation of his own talent.

Thanks to the dusty layer which covered it for so many years, the "Assumption" shines with youthful brilliancy. The centuries stayed their steps for it, and we enjoy the supreme delight of seeing a painting by Titian as it came from his palette.

Opposite Titian's "Assumption" has been placed Tintoretto's "Saint Mark delivering a Slave," as the most robust picture and the one best fitted to form a pendant to so splendid a masterpiece. Tintoretto is the king of violent painters. He has incredible fury in composition, vigour in execution, and boldness in foreshortening, and the "Saint Mark" may pass for one of his fiercest and most audacious paintings. The subject is the patron saint of Venice coming to the

aid of a poor slave, whom a barbarous master torments and tortures because of the obstinate devotion of the poor fellow to the saint. The slave is stretched on the ground on a cross, surrounded by busy torturers who are making a vain effort to fasten him to the infamous tree. The nails turn back, the mallets break, the axes fly in pieces. More merciful than men, the instruments of torture are blunted in the hands of the torturers; the spectators look at each other and whisper in astonishment, the judge bends over the tribunal to see why his orders are not executed; while Saint Mark, in one of the most violent foreshortenings a painter ever risked, dives from heaven to earth, without clouds, wings, cherubs, without any of the aerostatic means usually employed in sacred pictures, as he comes to deliver the man who believes in him. This vigorous figure, with the muscles of an athlete and the proportions of a colossus, flying through the air like a rock hurled by a catapult, produces the strangest effect. The drawing is so marvellous that the massive saint sustains himself and does not fall. It is a downright *tour de force*. If to this be added that the picture is so strong in tone, so appropriate in its contrasts of light

and shadow, so vigorous in detail, so harsh and violent in touch that the most intense Caravaggios and Spagnolettis, if placed by the side of it would look like rosewater, some idea may be had of a painting which, in spite of some barbarisms, still preserves in its accessories the architectural, abundant and sumptuous aspect peculiar to the Venetian school.

There are also in the same room an "Adam and Eve" and an "Abel and Cain" by the same painter; two magnificent paintings worked out like studies, which are perhaps the most perfect piece of work, so far as execution goes, produced by him. Against a background of soft, mysterious green, the distant foliage of Eden, — or rather, the wall of the studio, — stand out two superb bodies, of a brilliantly warm white, of living carnation, powerfully real. It is probable that Eve holds out to Adam the fatal apple, which justifies the placing of two nude personages in the open air; but no matter, for never did two more beautiful bodies, never did whiter and softer flesh come to life under the brush of a colourist. Tintoretto, who had written on the wall, "The drawing of Michael Angelo and the colouring of Titian," has in this painting carried out at least one half of his programme.

The companion painting of "Abel and Cain" breathes all the savage fury that one expects from such a subject and such a painter. Death, the consequence of the fall of our first parents, enters on the young earth in a formidable shadow, wherein are rolling the murderer and his victim. In one corner of the painting is a horrible detail: the head of a sheep cut off and bleeding. Is it the victim offered up by Abel, or a symbol that innocent animals are also to bear the penalty of Eve's curiosity?

Bonifazzio is an admirable artist. His "Wicked Rich Man" is a thoroughly Venetian painting. It lacks neither the handsome women with their hair rolled up in tresses, with strings of pearls, dresses of velvet and brocade, nor the splendid lords in gallant and courteous attitudes, the musicians, pages, negroes, nor the damask tablecloth richly covered with plate of gold and silver, the dogs playing on the mosaic pavement, and this time smelling at the rags of Lazarus with the mistrust of well-bred animals, nor the terraces with balustrades on which the wine is cooling in antique craters, nor the white columns between which the sky shines out deeply blue; only, Paolo Veronese's silvery gray here has an amber tint; the silver is gilded. Bonifaz-

zio, who painted portraits, gave to his heads something more intimate than did the author of the four great feasts and of the ceilings of the Palace of the Doges, accustomed as he was to look at subjects from the decorative point of view. The faces in Bonifazzio's painting, studied and individually characteristic, positively recall the patrician types of Venice, which so often posed to the artist. The anachronism of the costumes shows that Lazarus is but a mere pretext, and that the real subject of the painting is a banquet of lords with courtesans, their mistresses, in one of those beautiful palaces which plunge their marble feet into the waters of the Grand Canal.

Let us not pass too quickly before these "Apostles," of such fine port, so rich in colour, and so religiously grave, as is not always the case in the Venetian school, especially in the second half of the sixteenth century, when the pagan ideas of the Renaissance made their way into art and developed the sensualist tendencies of these splendid masters. The Academy of the Fine Arts possesses a great number of Bonifazzio's works. In this room alone, besides the "Wicked Rich Man" and the "Apostles," there is an "Adoration of the Magi," "Christ and the Woman Taken in Adultery," "Saint

Jerome and Saint Catharine," "Saint Mark," "Jesus Enthroned surrounded by Saints," — all of them paintings of the highest merit, which stand being placed in company with those of Titian, Tintoretto, and Paolo Veronese.

A great painter, little known in France, is Rocco Marconi, an artist whose style is pure and whose feeling is deep. He is a sort of Italian Albert Dürer, less fantastic and chimerical than the German, but with a sort of archaic calm in his manner which makes him appear older than his contemporaries, as does Ingres among Delacroix, Decamps, Couture, Müller, and Diaz. The heads in his "Christ between Saint John and Saint Paul" have much character and nobility, the folds of the draperies are very tasteful, and the group in its firm colour stands out well against the sky dappled with clouds.

Here on the wall is a whole line of the old Venetians that I spoke of as we entered the Academy of the Fine Arts, suave, pure, ingenuous, gentle, and charming. Giovanni Bellini, Cima da Conegliano, and Vittorio Carpaccio each offer us the same subject, one which was sufficient for the whole of the Middle Ages and gave birth to thousands of masterpieces, — the

Madonna and Child Enthroned, surrounded by saints, usually the patrons of the giver; a custom which makes pedants complain of anachronism under the pretext that it is not natural that Saint Francis of Assisi, Saint Sebastian, and Saint Catharine, or any other saint, should happen to be in the same frame as the Blessed Virgin, and that the costumes of the Middle Ages should be mingled with the draperies of antiquity. These critics have failed to understand that to a living faith there is no such thing as time or place, and that nothing is more touching than the bringing together of the idol and the devotee; a genuine bringing together, for the Madonna was then a living, contemporary, actual being, she entered into every one's life, she was the ideal of all timid lovers, the mother of all those who sorrowed; she was not relegated to the very confines of heaven, as incredulous ages, under pretext of respect, do with their gods. Men lived on a familiar footing with her, confided their griefs and their hopes to her, and no one would have been surprised to see her appear in the street in company with a monk, a cardinal, a nun, or any other holy personage. The more readily, therefore, did one allow in a painting a combination which shocks purists, but which is really deeply Catholic.

For my part I am very fond of these thrones and baldacchinos so preciously and delicately ornamented, of these Madonnas holding their Child upon their laps, with their simple golden nimbus, as if colour were not brilliant enough for them, of these little angels playing on the viol, the rebec, or the angelica. Yes, in spite of my love for pagan art, I love also these artless Gothic painters; these Fathers of the Church carrying great missals under their arms, wearing the cardinal's beretta, Saint George in his knightly armour, Saint Sebastian chastely nude, a sort of Christian Apollo, who, instead of shooting arrows, is pierced by them; the priests, the saints, and the monks in beautiful figured dalmatics and white or black gowns with many small folds; these young virgins leaning on a wheel and holding a palm, maids of honour of the Celestial Queen; all the loving and devout suite which humbly groups itself at the foot of the representation of the apotheosis of the Virgin Mother. It seems to me that this somewhat hieratic arrangement better fulfils the requirements of the church painting properly understood than compositions worked out from the realistic point of view. There is in this sort of composition a sacred rhythm which must strike the eye of the faithful.

The aspect of the image itself, so necessary in devotional subjects, in my opinion, is preserved, and art is in no wise the loser, for if individuality is bounded on the one hand, it is entirely free on the other. Each artist marks his individuality in the execution of the work, and these paintings, formed of the same elements, are perhaps the most personal of all. The feathered musicians of Carpaccio are unlike those of Giovanni Bellini, although they are tuning their guitars at the feet of the Virgin on the steps of an almost identical baldacchino. The winged virtuosi of Carpaccio are more elegant, have a more youthful grace; they look like pages of a noble house. Those of Giovanni Bellini are more artless, childish, babyish; they perform their music with the zeal of country choristers watched by their priest. All of them are charming, but their gracefulness is different and marked by the character of the painter.

The "Holy Family" of Paolo Veronese is composed in the rich and bountiful taste so familiar to that painter. Of course the amateurs of absolute truth will not find here the humble interior of the poor carpenter. The column of rose Verona brocatella, the splendid figured curtain, the skilfully broken folds of which

form the background of the painting, betoken a princely home, but the "Holy Family" is rather an apotheosis than a realistic representation of Joseph's humble household. The presence of Saint Francis offering a palm, of the priest in his cloak, of the saint with her golden hair tressed on the back of her head, the regal seat on which is enthroned the divine Mother presenting her Child to worship, suffice to prove this.

In the second room there is an immense painting, "The Feast at the House of Levi," one of the four great banquet-pieces by Paolo Veronese. The Louvre possesses two of them, the "Wedding at Cana," and the "Supper at the House of the Magdalen." They are of the same size as the one at Venice. All have the same broad, rich, easy composition, the same silvery brilliancy, the same air of festivity and joy; in all are seen those dark-complexioned men with their rich dalmatics of brocade, the fair women covered with pearls, the negro slaves offering dishes and ewers, the children playing on the steps of balustraded stairs with great white greyhounds; the columns, the marble statues; the beautiful, bright turquoise-blue sky which fairly deceives when, on drawing back, one looks at it

framed in by the door of the next room like a view in a panorama. Paolo Veronese is perhaps, without excepting Titian, Rubens, and Rembrandt, the greatest master of colour that ever lived. He has not the yellow tone of Titian nor the red tone of Rubens, nor the dark tone of Rembrandt. He paints luminously, with amazing accuracy; no one understood better than he did the relation of tones and their relative values. He obtains by juxtaposition tints of exquisite freshness which apart would seem gray and earthy. No one possesses to the same degree the bloom and flower of light.

The composition of the "Annunciation" by the same painter is curious. The Virgin Mary, kneeling at one end of a long canvas, the central part of which is filled in by elegant architecture, awaits modestly the arrival of the Angel, relegated to the other end of the painting and which seems to be wafted towards her on its open wings with its angelic salutation. This arrangement, contrary to the rule which places in the centre of a canvas the group upon which attention is directed, is a brilliant caprice which would have failed had it been attempted by any other than Paolo Veronese.

The Academy possesses an inestimable treasure, the last painting done by Titian, that patriarch of his art, who lived through the century and whom the plague surprised still at work at the age of ninety-nine. The painting, of a grave and melancholy aspect, the funeral subject of which seems to be a presentiment, represents a "Deposition from the Cross." The sky is dark, a livid light illuminates the body piously upborne by Joseph of Arimathea and Mary Magdalen. They are both sad and downcast, and seem by their hopeless attitudes to despair of the resurrection of the Master. They are evidently wondering with secret anxiety whether that body anointed with spices and ointments which they are going to place within the sepulchre will ever emerge from it. And indeed, never did Titian paint so thoroughly dead a body. There is not a drop of blood left under the greenish skin and in the bluish veins; life has withdrawn from them forever. The "Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane" in Saint Paul's, the "Pietà" in Saint Denis-du-Saint-Sacrament, by Eugène Delacroix, alone can give an idea of the sinister and painful picture in which for the first time the great Venetian lost his unchanging serenity. The shadow of approaching death seems to combat the

light of the painter who always had sunshine on his palette, and casts a twilight chill over the painting. The hand of the artist stopped in death before he had finished his task, as is testified by the inscription in black letters in the corner of the canvas: "The work which Titian left unfinished, Palma respectfully completed and offered to God." This noble, touching, and religious inscription turns the painting into a monument. Certainly Palma, himself a great painter, must have approached tremblingly the master's work, and his brush, clever as it was, must doubtless have hesitated and wavered many a time as it was laid on the touch of Titian.

If the Academy possesses the Omega of the painter's life, the Alpha is also found there in the shape of a great picture, the subject of which is the "Presentation of Mary in the Temple." This work was painted by Titian when almost a child; tradition says at the age of fourteen, which seems to me rather precocious in view of the beauty of the work. Bringing the matter down to likelihood, "The Presentation of Mary" assuredly goes back to the painter's extreme youth. All the qualities of the artist are seen in this juvenile work; they were developed more fully later,

but they exist already very visibly. The splendour of the architecture, the grand port of the old men, the abundant and fine drawing of the draperies, the great effects of tone, the manly simplicity of execution, — all these things reveal the master in the child. The luminous and bright colour, which the sunshine of mature age will gild with warmer reflections, possesses already the virile solidity, the robust consistency which are the distinctive characteristics of Titian.

He is, in my opinion, the only wholly healthy artist who has appeared since the days of antiquity. He has the mighty and strong serenity of Phidias; there is nothing feverish, troubled, restless in him; the modern malady has not laid its hands upon him. He is beautiful, robust, and tranquil like a pagan artist of the finest epoch. His superb nature unfolds itself complacently in a warm azure, under a warm sun, and his colour recalls the beautiful antique marbles gilded by the brilliant light of Greece. There is no groping, no effort, no violence; he attains the ideal at the first attempt, without a thought. A calm, vivacious joy lights up his whole work. Only he does not seem to suspect the existence of death, save perhaps in his last

painting. Without sensual ardour, without voluptuous intoxication, he exhibits to the gaze amid purple and gold, the beauty and the youth, all the amorous poetry of the feminine body, with the impassibility of a God exhibiting Eve to Adam. He sanctifies nudity by an expression of supreme repose, of ever fixed beauty, of the realisation of the absolute which makes the freest of the antique works so chaste. He alone has painted a woman who might, without appearing poor and mean, lie down by the side of the resting woman on the Parthenon.

Giorgione has painted an episode of the fisherman bringing to the Doge the ring of St. Mark. It is the battle between Saint George and Saint Theodore and the fiends. However much I admire the warm, living, rich colour of Giorgione in his "Pastoral Concert," I confess I care very little for the painting in the Academy of the Fine Arts at Venice.

Rocco Marconi's "Descent from the Cross" has all the serious qualities, all the unction of the Gothic masters, their tranquil symmetry, and a richness of tone and a bloom of colour which the great paintings in its vicinity do not diminish. The dead Christ, recalling by His bloodless flesh the mat pallor of

the Host, is sleeping softly on the Virgin's breast supported by a Magdalen of tender and delicate beauty, whose splendid fair hair falls in a golden cascade down a magnificent dress of figured damask of a rich, sombre purple like the ruby. Is it in the blood of the beloved heart that your dress has been dipped, O Magdalen, or in the drops falling from your own?

Padovanino has a "Virgin in Glory" after the Spanish manner, but I am not very much struck, in spite of the great talent displayed in it, by the vast, apocalyptic painting by Palma the younger, "The Triumph of Death." Saint John, seated upon the rock at Patmos, gazes with upraised pen, ready to fix it on his parchment, at the formidable vision which is unrolled before him: Justice and War ride upon sombre steeds, and Death, upon his great pale horse, cuts in the human harvest ears which fall in sheaves of bodies along the edges of the road. Except Tintoretto, who with his tawny colour and violent touch can represent terror and tragedy, these gloomy subjects are generally ill-suited to Venetian painters, whose happy temperament delights in the azure of the sea and of the sky, in the whiteness of marble and of flesh, in the

gold of hair and brocade, and the brilliant patterns of flowers and stuffs.

A very curious painting by Gentile Bellini is "The Procession on the Piazza San Marco of the Relics preserved by the Brotherhood of Saint John," at the time when Jacopo Salis is making his vow to the Cross. No more complete collection of the costumes of the day can be imagined; the patient and minute touch of the artist has allowed no detail to escape him; nothing is sacrificed, everything is rendered with Gothic conscientiousness. Every head must certainly be a portrait, and a portrait as accurate as a photograph, with the colouring in addition. The appearance of the Piazza San Marco, such as it was then, is as true as an architectural drawing. The old Byzantine mosaics, which were restored later, adorn the portals of the old basilica, and — a point to be noted — the belfries are gilded all over, which was never really the case. But the belfries were to have been gilded, as a matter of fact. The Doge Loredan needed, to carry on the war, the sequins intended to pay for the gilding, and the plan was not carried out. There is no trace of it left save in the painting of Gentile Bellini, who had provisionally gilded his Saint Mark.

A certain miracle of a cross fallen into the water from the top of a bridge in Venice, the bridge of Saint Leon and Saint Laurent, greatly interested the painters of that day. The Academy contains no less than three important paintings of this curious subject, one by Lazzaro Sebastiano, one by Gentile Bellini, and a third by Giovanni Mansueti. These paintings are most interesting, forming exceptions to the customary types of Italian painting, which turns in the narrow circle of devotional and mythological subjects and rarely touches the familiar scenes of real life. The monks of various orders, the patricians, the common people who are jumping into the water, swimming and diving in order to find the holy crucifix fallen within the canal, exhibit the strangest appearance. On the banks is the crowd in prayer, watching the result of the search. There is especially a line of ladies kneeling with clasped hands, covered with gems and pearls, in short-waisted dresses as in the time of the Empire, which exhibits a number of profiles set off one by the other with Gothic artlessness, and of extraordinary finish, beauty, elegance, and purity. In these paintings the old houses of Venice are seen, with their red walls, their windows with Lombard trefoils, their terraces

surmounted by posts, their wide-topped chimneys, the old bridges spanned by chains, and the gondolas of other days, which are not the shape of modern ones. There is no *felze*, but an awning stretched upon hoops, nor does any one of them have the sort of fiddle-head in polished iron which serves as a counterpoise to the rower placed at the poop. They are also much less slender.

Most elegant, most graceful, most juvenile is the series of paintings in which Vittorio Carpaccio has depicted the life of Saint Ursula. Carpaccio possesses the ideal charm, the youthful grace which Raphael exhibits in the "Marriage of the Virgin," one of the first and perhaps the most charming of his pictures. It is impossible to fancy more artless turns of the head, more angelically coquettish attitudes. There is especially a young man with long hair, seen from behind, whose cape with a velvet collar is half slipping from his shoulder, who is so proudly, so youthfully, and so seductively beautiful that he looks like Praxiteles' Cupid wearing a mediæval costume, or, rather, like an angel to whom it has occurred to dress himself up as a Venetian magnifico. I am surprised that the name of Carpaccio is not better known. He possesses all the

youthful purity and all the graceful charm of the first manner of the painter of Urbino, and in addition the wondrous Venetian colour, which no other school was able to equal.

The Pinacoteca Contarini, the bequest of that lordly amateur of the arts who gave to the Museum his collection of arms, statues, vases, carved furniture, and other precious things, contains choice specimens of the Venetian and other schools. I will mention the "Pilgrims of Emmaüs," by Marco Marzali, painted with almost German dry minuteness; Andrea Cardegli's "Child Jesus, Saint John, and Saint Catharine," whose fair heads stand out against the green landscape background seen through a window; a "Virgin and Child with the Young Saint John," by Giovanni Battista Cima, somewhat dry and cutting too harshly against a background of blue mountains; a "Marriage of Saint Catharine," and a "Madonna and Child" by Francesco da Fiesolo, very sweet, pretty, and fresh, charming in its *morbidezza*. The triptych of "Fortune," by Giovanni Bellini is remarkable for its allegorical inventions. In the centre panel a nude woman stands upon an altar, accompanied by angels or Cupids playing on the drum; on the side panels a nude youth, crowned, a cloak on

his shoulder, offers presents to a warrior who avoids him; a woman holding a ball, her hair tressed into the shape of a helmet, stands in a boat, while Cupids play amid the waves like Tritons.

Callot's etchings please me much more than his paintings, the authenticity of which is more or less doubtful. There is in the Pinacoteca Contarini a "Fair" by the Nancy engraver, swarming with Bohemians, charlatans, beggars, lansknechts, stealing, playing tricks, begging, drinking, gambling, — a view of that picaresque world which he knew so well; but the artist is not as skilful with the brush as with the graver.

Let me close with the gem, the pearl, the star of this museum, — a "Madonna and the Child Jesus" by Giovanni Bellini. The subject is worn out, has been treated a thousand times, and yet it blooms with eternal youth under the brush of the old master. What does it consist of? A woman with a child on her knees, — but what a woman! Her face pursues you like a dream, and once you have seen it you never forget it. It is of impossible beauty, and yet strangely true; it is of immaculate virginity and penetrating voluptuousness; supreme disdain in infinite sweetness. I seemed, as I

beheld that painting, to be looking at the incarnation of my secret dreams surprised in my soul by the artist. Every day I spent an hour in mute worship at the feet of the celestial ideal, and never could I have left Venice, if a young French painter, taking pity on me, had not made me a copy of that beloved head.

THE STREETS—THE EMPEROR'S FÊTE DAY

THE streets of Venice are rarely mentioned, although they exist in great numbers, and writers describe the quaintness of the canals and gondolas alone. The absence of horses and carriages gives to Venetian streets a peculiar appearance. By their narrowness they resemble the streets of Oriental cities. As the area of the islands is limited, and the houses generally very high, the narrow lanes which separate them look like saw-cuts in enormous blocks of stone. Certain *calles* in Granada and certain London alleys very closely approximate them.

The Frezzaria is one of the most animated streets of the city. It is quite six to eight feet wide, and is therefore analogous to the Rue de la Paix in Paris. It is in this street chiefly that are to be found the goldsmiths who manufacture those delicate little golden chains as tenuous as hairs, which are called *jaserons*, and which are one of the characteristic curiosities of

Venice. With the exception of these chains and a few rough gems set in silver for sale to country people, which an artist may think picturesque, these shops have nothing remarkable. The fruiterers' shops have splendid stalls. The heaps of blooming peaches, the quantities of golden, amber-coloured, transparent grapes coloured with the richest tints, shining like gems, and the grains of which, strung in the form of necklaces and bracelets, would admirably adorn the neck and arms of some antique Mænad, are beautifully fresh and admirably grouped. The tomatoes mingle their brilliant scarlet with the golden tints and the watermelon shows its rosy pulp through the cleft in its green skin. All these lovely fruits, brightly lighted by gas-jets, show rarely well against the vine leaves upon which they are laid. It is impossible to regale one's eyes more agreeably, and often, without being hungry, I purchased peaches and grapes through sheer love of colour. I recall also certain fishmongers' stalls covered with little fishes so white, so silvery, so pearly, that I felt like swallowing them raw, after the manner of the ichthyophagists of the Southern seas, for fear of spoiling their tints. I could understand, on seeing them, the barbarous custom of ancient banquets, which consisted in

watching the death of murænas in crystal vases in order to enjoy the opal tints which they assumed in their death throes.

In the evening these streets are extremely animated and brilliant. The stalls are illuminated *a giorno*, and the narrowness of the street prevents the light being scattered. The cook shops and the pastry shops, the *osteria*, the taverns, the numerous cafés, bloom and blaze; there is a constant going and coming of people. Every shop, without a single exception, has its miniature chapel adorned with a Madonna, in front of which are placed lighted lamps or tapers and pots of artificial or natural flowers. Sometimes it is a statuette in coloured plaster, sometimes a smoky painting, sometimes a Greek image with a Byzantine gold background, or a simple modern engraving. The Madonna replaces in devout Italy the Lares of antiquity. This form of the worship of the Virgin, so touching and poetic, has but few, if any, dissenters in Venice, and the followers of Voltaire would, so far, be ill-satisfied with the progress of enlightenment in the ancient city of the Doges. At nearly every street-corner, at nearly every descent of a bridge, there is in a niche, behind a grating or a glass pane, a Madonna on an altar adorned with wreaths of

elder pith, necklaces of glass beads, paper flowers, dresses of silver lace, and all the pious rags with which the artless Southern faith overloads with childish coquetry the objects of its adoration. Candles and lamps continually burn before these altars covered with *ex-votos*, silver hearts, wax legs, women's breasts, paintings of shipwrecks seamed by lightnings, of burned houses, and other catastrophes, in which the wonder-working Virgin invariably turns up at the right moment. Near these chapels there is always some old woman praying, some young girl on her knees, some sailor making a vow or fulfilling it, and also at times people whose dress indicates that they belong to a class which with us does not possess so much faith, and leaves the religion of Christ to the common people and to servants. Contrary to preconceived ideas, I found Italy more devout than Spain.

One of these chapels, near the Ponte della Paglia on the Riva degli Schiavoni, has always a large number of worshippers, either because it happens to be upon a frequented street, or because it possesses some peculiar privilege or immunity. There are also every here and there alms-boxes for the benefit of souls in Purgatory.

The small coins dropped into them pay for masses for the poor forgotten dead.

Next to the Frezzaria, the street which leads from the Campo San Moisè to the Campo de Santa Maria Zobenigo is one of those which offer to a stranger the greatest number of points worthy of observation. Many lanes open into it as into an artery, for it connects the banks of the Grand Canal with the Piazza San Marco. The shops remain open longer than elsewhere, and as it is nearly straight, *forestieri* traverse it without being afraid of losing their way; a very easy thing to do in Venice, the maze of streets, complicated by canals and blind alleys, being so perplexing that it has been found necessary to mark by a succession of stones, on which are cut arrows indicating the way, the road from the Piazza to the railway station, situated at the other end of the city, near the Church degli Scalzi.

How often have I enjoyed losing myself at night in that labyrinth out of which a Venetian alone can find his way! After having followed a score of streets, traversed some thirty lanes, crossed ten canals, ascended and descended as many bridges, plunged at hazard into *sotto-portici*, I have found myself just where I started from. These walks, for which I chose moonlight nights, en-

abled me to see Venice in its secret aspect, and from numerous picturesque and unexpected points of view.

Sometimes I came upon a great palace half in ruins, faintly showing in the shadows, thanks to a silvery beam; the panes left in its broken windows gleaming suddenly like scales or mirrors; now a bridge tracing its black arch against a stretch of bluish water over which floated a light mist; farther on a trail of red fire, falling from a lighted house upon the oily darkness of a sleeping canal; at other times a deserted square on which stood out quaintly the top of a church covered with statues which in the obscurity looked like spectres; or else a tavern where were gesticulating like demons gondoliers and *facchini*, their shadows projected upon the window; or else a half-opened water-gate through which a mysterious figure sprang into a gondola.

Once I thus reached a really sinister lane behind the Grand Canal. The high houses, originally covered with the red tint which is usually found upon old Venetian buildings, had a fierce and truculent aspect. Rain, damp, neglect, and the absence of light at the bottom of this narrow cut had little by little killed the colour of the façades and made the wash run. A faint reddish tint still marked the walls and looked like

blood insufficiently cleansed off after the commission of a crime. Oppression, chilliness, terror, stole out from these sanguinolent walls; a sickly odour of saltpetre and well water, a mouldy smell reminiscent of prisons, cloisters, and cellars, seized me as I entered it. At the blind windows there was no gleam of light, no appearance of life. The low doors, studded with rusty nails, their iron knockers worn by time, seemed incapable of ever opening. Nettles and wall plants grew on the thresholds and seemed not to have been trodden for a long time back by any human foot. A lean, black dog which sprang suddenly out of the shadow like a jack-in-the-box, began to bark furiously and plaintively at the sight of me, as if it were unaccustomed to meet men. It followed me for a short time, tracing around me windings after the fashion of the poodle that accompanied Faust and Wagner on their walk; but looking at it fixedly, I said to it in Goethe's words: "Unclean animal, in vain you bark and ope your mouth. You shall never swallow my monad." These words seemed to astonish it, and seeing itself discovered, it disappeared, uttering a lamentable howl. Was it a dog or a larva? This is a point which I prudently prefer to leave undecided.

I greatly regret that I do not possess Hoffmann's talent to turn that sinister street into the scene of a terrifying and strange tale, such as "The Deserted House," or "The Eve of Saint Sylvester," in which alchemists fight over a manikin, and hurl their microscopes at each other in a whirlwind of monstrous visions. The dark windows were meant to frame in the bald, wrinkled, grimacing heads, decomposed by a continuous metamorphosis, of Master Tabracchio, Spallanzani, Leuwenhoeck, Swammerdam, of Counsellor Tusman and Recorder Lindhorst. If Gozzi, the author of the "Contratempi," who believed himself the victim of the hatred of wizards and hobgoblins whose tricks he had discovered and whose secrets he had told in his fairy pieces, ever traversed this solitary lane, he must have met with some of the amazing misadventures reserved, apparently, for the poet of "Turandot," "The Love of the Three Orange Trees," and the "Blue Monster." But Gozzi, who felt the invisible world, must certainly have always avoided Barristers' Street at the hour of twilight.

On returning from one of these fantastic trips, during which the city had struck me as being more deserted than usual, I went to bed feeling rather mel-

ancholy, after having sustained against a monstrous mosquito — buzzing like a wasp, waving his antennæ, and twisting his proboscis like the god Ganesa, and making his saws screak with the most audacious ferocity — a terrible combat in which I was defeated and whence I issued full of many poisoned wounds. I was beginning to sink into the black ocean of sleep, so like death that the ancients called it its sister, when, through my dense somnolence I heard low rumours, distant thunder, and the sound of terrifying voices. Was it a tempest, a battle, a cataclysm of nature, a combat between demons? Such was the question which occurred to me as I woke. Soon a deafening clamour tore through my last vestige of sleep as forked lightning through a black cloud. The copper discs of the cymbals sounded like the clash of armour, gongs vibrated with hollow roar, the big drum boomed like a Malay or a hundred bulls, the ophicleides and trumpets let loose metallic hurricanes, the cornets à piston shrieked ragingly, the little flute made desperate efforts to rise above the noise and overtop it. All the instruments rivalled each other in riot and hurly-burly. It sounded like a Festival by Hector Berlioz going adrift at night on the waters. When this musical whirlwind passed

under my balcony, I seemed to hear at one and the same time the trumpets of Jericho and the clarions of the Last Judgment. A tempest of bells, ringing full swing, formed the accompaniment.

The tumult proceeded towards the Grand Canal amid the red glare of many torches. It struck me that the serenade was somewhat uproarious, and I pitied with all my heart the fair for whom this monstrous nocturnal racket, this colossal hubbub, was intended. "Her lover is not very discreet," thought I to myself, "and he is not afraid to compromise his beauty. A guitar, a violin, a theorbo would, in my opinion, have been sufficient." I was just falling asleep as the noise died away, when a white blinding flash struck on my closed eyes like the livid lightnings illuminating the darkness of the deepest night, and a frightful explosion which made the panes rattle and the house tremble from top to bottom, broke the silence. I leaped three feet into the air, wondering whether it was a thunderbolt falling into the room, or the siege of Venice resumed without notice and a shell bursting through the ceiling and plumping down on me in the midst of my sleep. Similar deafening detonations were repeated every fifteen minutes until morning, to the

serious damage of my windows and my nerves. They seemed to come from a very near point, and every time a livid flash foretold them. Between the discharges deep silence, the silence of death; none of the nocturnal sounds which are like the breathing of sleeping cities. In the midst of the uproar Venice, mute, seemed to have sunk and lost itself in the lagoons. Every window was dark; not a single gondola lantern starred the profound darkness.

The next morning the riddle was read to me: it was the fête day of the Emperor of Austria; all this excitement was in honour of the German Cæsar. The batteries of the Giudecca and of San Giorgio Maggiore fired right opposite me, and many window-panes in the neighbourhood had been smashed. With dawn the row recommenced worse than ever. The frigates fired alternately with the batteries; the bells clanged in the innumerable belfries of the city; file firing and volley firing rattled over all at regular intervals. The burnt powder, rising everywhere in thick clouds was the incense destined to tickle the nostrils of the master, if from the height of his throne in Vienna he happened to turn his head towards the Adriatic. It seemed to me that in all these homages to the Emperor there

was a certain ostentation of artillery, a certain double meaning in the musketry firing. These festival compliments in the form of cannon-shots had a second purpose, and one did not need to be clever to understand it.

I hastened to the Piazza. A *Te Deum* was being sung in the Basilica. The garrison in full dress was drawn up in a square on the Piazza, kneeling and rising at a sign from the officers, as the service proceeded. A brilliant staff, covered with gold lace, was in the centre, sparkling brightly in the sunshine. Then at certain intervals the muskets were raised together, and admirably sustained file firing sent flying into the skies great white clouds of terrified doves. The poor pigeons of San Marco, terrified by the tumult and believing that, in violation of their immunities, they were to form the materials for an immense stew, did not know which way to turn. Crazed with terror they collided with each other in mid-air, struck against cornices, and flew off at top speed between domes and chimneys. Then, when silence came again, they returned to peck seed familiarly at their usual place at the very feet of the soldiers, so strong is the force of habit.

All this was going on in the midst of complete solitude. The Piazza, always swarming with people, was deserted; a few strangers only were moving about in small, isolated groups under the arcades of the Procuratie; the infrequent spectators who were not foreigners betrayed their German origin by their fair hair and their square faces. There was not a single woman's face at any window, and yet the sight of handsome uniforms worn by good-looking officers is appreciated in every country in the world by the more graceful half of humankind. Venice, suddenly depopulated, looked like one of those Oriental cities in Arab tales, which have been laid waste by an angry enchanter. This uproar in deep silence, this excitement in emptiness, this vast display of force in isolation, had something strange, painful, alarming, supernatural about it. I felt a deep and singular impression in the presence of a people apparently dead, while its oppressors exulted in their joy, of a city which suppressed itself in order not to be present at the triumph. The *non est* raised to the state of manifestation, muteness that is a threat, absence that means revolt are the resources of the despair to which despotism drives the slave. Assuredly a universal howl, a general curse hurled against

the Emperor of Austria could not have been more forcible. As Venice could not protest otherwise, it had surrounded the fête with void.

The discharges of artillery continued the whole day, and the regiments manœuvred on the Piazza and the Piazzetta, with myself as their only spectator. Weary of this monotonous diversion, I went for my favourite walk on the Riva degli Schiavoni, on which strolled a few Greeks and Armenians. There my ears were again torn by the guns of the frigate anchored in the port. At every discharge a poor little dog, tied by a rope to the mast of a Zante or Corfu vessel, sprang forward mad with terror and circled as far off as his leash allowed him, protesting as best he could against that stupid noise and yelping as if the sound hurt him. I was quite of the dog's opinion, and as I was not tied by a cord, I sailed off to Quintavalle, where I dined under the arbour at a sufficient distance from that hateful military uproar.

That evening there was no one at the Café Florian. Those who have lived in Venice can alone conceive the deep meaning of the fact. The flower girls, the caramel vendors, the exhibitors of Chinese shadows, and even the ruffians had disappeared. Chairs, benches,

and galleries were deserted alike; there was not a soul even in the church, as if it were useless to pray to a God who left the people in slavery. I do not know whether, that evening, the little tapers before the Madonnas at the street corners were lighted. The band at the retreat played, *in deserto*, a magnificent overture, German music too, — an overture by Weber, if I remember it rightly.

Not knowing what to do with myself at the close of this lugubrious evening, I entered the Apollo Theatre. The auditorium looked like the interior of a columbarium; the empty and sombre boxes, like niches from which the coffins had been removed. A few squads of Austrian soldiery were scattered upon the empty benches; some dozen German functionaries, with their wives and children, tried to look as if they were many, and to simulate the public which had abstained from coming. But apart from the soldiers, the huge place did not hold more than fifty spectators. A wretched company played sadly and discontentedly behind smoking footlights a poor translation of a French play. A cold sadness, a deadly weariness fell from the ceiling like a wet, icy mantle. The dark theatre wore mourning for the liberty of Venice in the very face of the Austrians.

The next day the sea-breeze had carried away the smell of the powder, and the doves, reassured, swept down like snowflakes upon the Piazza San Marco, while all Venice was ostentatiously stuffing itself with ices at the Café Florian.

TRAVELS IN ITALY

SAN BIAGGIO—THE CAPUCHIN CONVENT

EVERY one, at least once in his life, has been unable to get rid of a musical phrase, a line of poetry, an expression dropped in conversation, heard by chance, and which pursues him everywhere with the invincible obstinacy of a spectre. A monotonous voice murmurs in your ear the accursed theme, a dumb orchestra plays it within your brain, your pillow repeats it, and your dreams whisper it; an invisible power forces you to mutter it stupidly from morning to night, as a devotee repeats his somnolent litany.

For a week past a song of Alfred de Musset's, an imitation, no doubt, of some old popular Venetian poetry, had fluttered about my lips, twittering like a bird, without my being able to drive it away. In spite of myself, I hummed in the most incongruous situations:

"At San Biaggio, on the Zuecca, you were very, very happy, at San Biaggio. At San Biaggio, on the Zuecca, we were happy indeed.

"But to remember it, will you take the trouble? But to remember it, and to return to it?

"At San Biaggio, on the Zuecca, in the flowery meads vervain to pick; at San Biaggio on the Zuecca, there to live and die."

The Zuecca — short for the Giudecca — was before me, separated only by the breadth of the canal, and nothing was easier than to go to that San Biaggio which the song describes as a sort of Cytherea, a languorous El Dorado, the earthly Paradise of love, where it would be sweet to live and die. A few strokes of the oars would have taken me to it; but knowing that one should never land upon fairy shores lest the mirage should vanish into haze, I continued to be unbearable with my refrain, "At San Biaggio on the Zuecca," which was turning into what is called in painters' studios a bore. So my travelling companion, who for a week had borne with that cantilena as unendurable as the humming of a mosquito, unable to put up with it any longer, said sharply one morning to our young gondolier as he stepped into the craft, "To San Biaggio on the Zuecca." In order to break me of it, he was going to take me into my dream and my refrain, which is an excellent homœopathic remedy.

SAN BIAGGIO—CAPUCHIN CONVENT

Never a flowery mead did I come across at San Biaggio, and to my great regret, no vervain could I pluck. Around the church stretch market gardens in which vegetables take the place of flowers. Disappointed though I was, I could not help admiring the very fine grapes and splendid pumpkins. It is probable that when the song was written the point of the island was waste ground, the fresh grass of which was diapered with flowers in the springtime, and lovers walked hand in hand, looking at the moon. An old Venetian guidebook describes the Zuecca as a place full of gardens, orchards, and delightful spots. Poetic enthusiasm is killed when one finds instead of a dainty flower with tender colours and penetrating perfume, blooming on the green sward, big pumpkins turning yellow under broad leaves, and from that moment I ceased to sing, "At San Biaggio on the Zuecca."

In order to turn my trip to account, I proceeded along the island to the church del Redentore, situated near the Capuchin convent. The church possesses a fine Greek façade, elegant in style and harmonious in proportion, such as Palladio knew how to design. It is a kind of architecture which satisfies people of

taste by its sobriety, its purity, and its true classicism. At the risk of being charged with being a barbarian, I confess that these façades give me very slight pleasure. In the case of Catholic churches, I believe only in the Byzantine, Romanesque, or Gothic styles. Greek art was so appropriate to polytheism that it is very difficult for it to express any other thought; hence churches built in accordance with its principles lack wholly the religious impress, in the sense which we attach to that word. The luminous serenity of antiquity, with its perfect rhythm and its logical forms, cannot render the vague, infinite, and mysterious meaning of Christianity; the unchangeable happiness of paganism does not understand the incurable Christian melancholy, and Greek architecture produces, as far as temples go, only palaces, exchanges, ball-rooms, and museums, more or less ornamented, in which Jupiter would be very comfortable, but in which Christ finds it difficult to dwell.

But once the style of architecture is accepted, it must be admitted that the church del Redentore shows well on the banks of the canal in which it is reflected, with its great monumental staircase of seventeen

marble steps, its triangular gable, its Corinthian columns, its bronze doors and statues, its two pyramidions, and its white dome which is so effective at sunset when you are travelling in a gondola between the Public Gardens and San Giorgio Maggiore.

The church was built in fulfilment of the vow of the Senate at the time of the plague of 1576, which caused frightful mortality in the city, and killed, among other illustrious personages, Titian, the patriarch of painting, laden with years and glory. The interior is very simple, and even somewhat bare. Whether the funds gave out or for some other reason, the statues which appear to fill the niches along the nave are mere shams, skilfully done in grisaille by the Capuchin Father Piazza. The niches themselves are real, but the statues, painted upon wooden boards cut out to shape, betray the sham by the lack of thickness when looked at in profile; if looked at from the front, the illusion is perfect.

As regards the paintings, it is the old story: Tintoretto, Bassano, Paolo Veronese. There are such numbers of excellent paintings in Venice that one almost gets tired of them, and ends by believing that in those days it was no more difficult to paint a

splendid Venetian picture than it is to-day to scribble an article *currente calamo*; yet I advise the tourist to look at a Giovanni Bellini, of the greatest beauty, which adorns the sacristy. The subject is the Blessed Virgin and the Child Jesus between Saint Jerome and Saint Francis. The divine Mother contemplates with profound adoration the Child sleeping in her lap. Little smiling angels playing the guitar, flutter on an ultramarine background. Every one knows with what delicacy, with what refinement of sentiment, with what purity Giovanni Bellini paints scenes to which his brush is accustomed; but in this one, besides the artless charm of the composition, the Gothic fidelity of drawing, and the somewhat dry carefulness of the modelling, there is a brilliancy of colour, a golden warmth of tone which presages Giorgione; consequently some connoisseurs attribute this painting to Palma Vecchio. I believe it is by Giovanni Bellini. The unusual brilliancy of the colouring is due simply to the more perfect preservation of the painting. Venice is so naturally the place for colour that gray is impossible, even for line painters, and the most severely Gothic enrich their asceticism with Giorgione's amber.

Two or three Capuchins engaged in prayer would have given to this church, had the light been less brilliant, the look of one of those paintings by Granet which were so much admired a score of years ago. The good fathers were perfectly posed; all they needed was the dab of brilliant red on the ear. Another was humbly sweeping the choir, and I asked him whether we might visit the monastery. He very politely granted our request, and made us enter by a small side door leading from the church into the cloister.

I had long felt a desire to see the interior of an inhabited monastery. In Spain I had been unable to satisfy this religious and picturesque desire. The monks had just been secularised, and the monasteries, as was the case in France after the Revolution, had become national property. I had walked in melancholy fashion through the Carthusian Convent at Miraflores near Burgos, where I met only a poor old man dressed in a dark costume, something between a peasant's and a priest's dress, smoking his cigarette near a *brazero*, who guided me along the deserted passages and the abandoned cloisters on which opened the empty cells. At Toledo the Monastery of San Juan de los Reyes, a splendid ruined building, held only

a few timid lizards and stray snakes which, at the sound of our steps, disappeared under the nettles and débris. The refectory was almost entire, and above the door a frightful painting exhibited a rotting body. The object was to kill the sensuality of the meals, which were, nevertheless, served with hermit-like austerity. The Carthusian Convent at Granada held only turtles, which dived heavily into the water from the edge of the fish-pond at the approach of visitors; and the magnificent convent of San Domingo, on the slope of Antequerula, listened in deep solitude to the murmur of its fountains and of its laurel woods.

The Capuchin convent on the Zuecca was quite unlike these wonderful edifices with their long white marble cloisters, their elegantly carved arcades, marvels of the Middle Ages or of the Renaissance, their courts planted with jessamine, myrtles, and rose laurels, their upspringing fountains, their cells through the windows of which one could see the soft, silvery blue of the Sierra Nevada. It was not one of those magnificent refuges in which austerity is but an additional delight to the soul, and in which a philosopher would be as happy as a Christian. The cloister was bare of architectural ornaments: low arcades, short pillars, a

prison yard rather than a promenade for reverie. An ugly roof of staring red tiles covered the whole building; there was not even the severe and sad bareness, the gray, cold tones, the dimness of light which are favourable to thought; a harsh, brilliant light crudely lighted up the wretched details and brought out their commonplace meanness. In the garden, of which one caught a glimpse, there were rows of cabbages and vegetables of the harshest green, — not a shrub, not a flower, everything was sacrificed to strict usefulness.

I next entered the interior of the convent, which is cut by long passages at right angles to each other. At the end of the passages there were chapels made in the wall and coloured with coarse frescoes in honour of the Madonna or some saint of the order. The windows, with their panes set in lead, admitted light, but did not produce those effects of light and shade which painters know so well how to turn to account. It seemed as though everything had been calculated in that building to produce the greatest possible amount of ugliness in the smallest possible space. Here and there were hung engravings pasted on canvas representing in innumerable small medallions all the saints, cardinals, prelates, and illustrious personages of the order, — a

sort of genealogical tree of this impersonal and ever renewed family. Low doors marked at regular intervals the long white lines of the walls. On each was inscribed a religious reflection, a prayer, or one of those brief Latin maxims so full of thought. An image of the Virgin or a portrait of a saint, the object of special devotion on the part of the inhabitant of the cell, was added to the inscription.

A great tiled roof covered, without touching them, the cells of these monastic bees, like a cover placed upon rows of boxes.

A bell sounded, calling either to a repast, to prayer, or some other ascetic exercise. The doors of the cells opened, and the passages, but now deserted, were filled with a troop of monks, who walked on two by two with bowed heads, their great beards spread over their breasts, their hands crossed within their sleeves, as they moved towards the part of the convent to which the bell was calling them. When they raised their feet, the sandals, as they dropped from their heels, tapped on the floor in a very monastic and lugubrious fashion and gloomily timed their spectral march. Some forty of them passed before us, and I saw nothing but heavy, dull, brutish faces without any character, in spite of

their beards and their shaven polls. How different they were from the monk of San Servolo, consumed by fervour, calcined by faith, worn by macerations, and whose feverish eye shone with the light of the future life, an ecstasy betraying delirium, — Daniel among the lions.

Certainly I had entered the convent with respectful, if not pious intentions. If I do not myself possess faith, I admire it in others, and if I cannot be a believer, at least I can understand others being so. I was therefore prepared to feel all the austere ardour of the cloister, and I was rather cruelly disappointed. The convent produced on me the effect of a lazaretto, of a lunatic asylum, or a barracks. The repulsive odour of a human menagerie rose to my nostrils and sickened me. It has been said of some holy personages that they were filled with the madness of the cross, *stultitiam crucis;* it seemed to me that these monks had the idiocy of the cross, and in spite of myself my mind rebelled and I blushed at such a degradation of creatures made in God's image. I was ashamed that a hundred men should collect in such a hole to be dirty and stink in obedience to certain rules in honour of Him who has created eighty thousand different kinds

of flowers. The loathsome incense revolted me, and I felt towards these poor Capuchin fathers involuntary secret horror.

When I left the convent two of the fathers who had business in Venice, asked us to take them in our gondola across the Giudecca. Through humility they would not accept the place of honour in the *felze* which we offered them, and they remained standing by the prow. They looked rather well thus. Their gowns of brown stuff fell in two or three heavy folds which Fra Bartolommeo would not have disdained when painting the gown of Saint Francis of Assisi; their bare, sandalled feet were very handsome, the great toe separated and the other toes long, like those of antique statues. I gave them a few pence to say some Masses on my behalf. The sceptical ideas which had worried me during the whole of my visit justified such Christian submission on my part, and if it was the devil who had suggested them to me, he must have been badly tricked and bitten his tail like an angry monkey. The good priests took the money, slipped it into the fold of their sleeve, and seeing that I was such a good Catholic, they gave me a few copper-plate engravings, which I have carefully preserved: Saint Moses the

prophet, Saint Francis, a few other bearded saints, and a certain Veronica Giuliana, a Capuchin abbess (*abbadessa cappuccina*), with her head thrown back and her eyes filled with ecstasy, like those of Saint Teresa of Spain, who pitied the devil because he could not love.

We landed the good fathers at the Traghetto di Moisè, and soon they disappeared in the narrow lanes.

My day had not been very favourable to my illusions. At San Biaggio on the Zuecca, pumpkins had taken the place of vervain, and where I had expected to find a sombre cloister with livid monks after the fashion of Zurbaran, I had found an ignoble home of Capuchins, with monks like those in Schlesinger's coloured lithographs. The latter disappointment was peculiarly painful to me, for I had long caressed the dream of ending my days under a monk's cowl in some handsome Italian or Portuguese convent, at Monte Casino or Maffra,—and now I did not feel at all like doing so.

TRAVELS IN ITALY

CHURCHES AND SCUOLE

WITH the exception of San Marco, a marvel which has no parallel save the mosque at Constantinople and that at Cordova, the Venetian churches are not remarkable for their architecture, or at least do not astonish a tourist who has visited the cathedrals of France, Spain, and Belgium. Save a few of the older and more interesting ones, they are all of the time of the Renaissance, and in the rococo style which very quickly followed in Italy the return to classical traditions. The former are in the style of Palladio; the latter in a particular style which I shall call the Jesuit. Nearly all the old churches in the city have unfortunately been restored in one or the other of these styles. Certainly Palladio, as is proved by so many noble buildings, is an architect of great merit, but he had not the least Catholic feeling, and he was better fitted to rebuild the temple of Diana at Ephesus and of Zeus Olympius than to construct a basilica for the Nazarene or any one of the martyrs of the Golden

Legend. He sucked like a bee the honey of Hymettus, and flew by the passion-flowers.

As for the Jesuit taste, with its gibbous domes, its swelling pillars, its pot-bellied balustrades, its volutes like flourishes, its puffy cherubs, its wretched angels, its napkin-like cartouches, its chicories the size of cabbages, its unhealthy affectations, and its extravagant ornamentation which looks like excrescences on diseased stone, I confess that it inspires me with insurmountable repugnance. It is more than unpleasant, — to me it is disgusting. Nothing, in my opinion, is more contrary to the Christian idea than that loathsome heaping up of devout knick-knacks, that ugly, ungracious luxury, overdone, heavy, like the luxury of a new-made rich man, which causes the chapel of the Most Blessed Virgin to resemble the boudoir of an Opera chorus-girl.

The Church degli Scalzi is in this style, and is a model of extravagant richness. The walls, overlaid with coloured marbles, represent vast hangings of silk damask with white and green borders; the frescoed ceilings by Tiepoletto and Lazzarini, bright, light, clear in tone, with rose and azure as the keynote of the colouring, would be admirably suited to a ball-room or a

theatre. The place must have looked lovely when it was filled with powdered abbés and fine ladies in the days of Cazenova and Cardinal de Bernis, while a musical Mass by Porpora was being performed by the violins and the chorus of the Fenice. Indeed, it would be the most natural thing in the world in such a place to worship the Eternal to a gavotte tune. How greatly I prefer the low Romanesque arches, the squat porphyry pillars, the antique capitals, the barbaric images standing out against a golden background in Byzantine mosaics, or the slender vaulting, the light columns, and the trefoil tracery of Gothic cathedrals.

These architectural defects, — to which one has to be resigned in Italy, for all the churches are built more or less in that taste, — are compensated for by the number and beauty of the objects of art contained in the buildings. Even if one does not admire the casket, the jewels it holds compel admiration. Everywhere one comes upon Titian, Paolo Veronese, Tintoretto, Palma Vecchia, and Palma the younger, Giovanni Bellini, Padovanino, Bonifazzio, and other great masters. Every chapel has its own museum, of which a king would be proud. This very Church degli Scalzi, once you put up with the bad taste of it,

contains some remarkable details. Its broad staircase of Verona brocatella, its handsome twisted pillars of red French marble, its giant prophets, its touchstone balustrades, its mosaic gates have a certain style about them and do not lack for grandeur. It contains a very fine painting by Giovanni Bellini, a "Virgin and Child," a magnificent bronze bas-relief by Sansovino representing scenes from the life of Saint Sebastian, and a group less severely artistic, but charming, by Toretti, Canova's master, — a Holy Family, Saint Joseph, the Virgin, and the Child Jesus. The Virgin has a delicate, plump face, the head is coquettishly posed, and her hands and feet are aristocratically small. She looks like a duchess of the court of Louis XV, and might very well represent Madame de Pompadour. Angels like ballet dancers accompany this pretty, worldly group. Assuredly it is not religious, but this mannered and clever grace has a charm of its own, and the decadent sculptor is still a great artist.

The Church of San Sebastiano, built by San Serlio, is in some sort the Pinacothek and the Pantheon of Paolo Veronese. He worked in it for years, and rests there forever in the blaze of his masterpieces. His tombstone is surmounted by his bust, and bears his

coat of arms, three trefoils on a field which I could not make out. We may admire this "Saint Sebastian" by Titian, with its fine old-man's head, its superb and magisterial port, and the pretty, artless movement of the child who holds the holy bishop's mitre. But I shall hasten on to the lord of the place, Paolo Caliari. The "Three Marys at the Foot of the Cross" are noticeable by the splendid composition and the richness of breadth characteristic of this painter, whom no one equalled in the art of filling spaces in great paintings. Brocade and damask are broken into rich folds, swell in splendid patterns, and the Christ from his cross of sorrows cannot help a faint half-smile, for the joy of being so admirably painted soothes his sufferings. The Magdalen is adorably beautiful; her great eyes are filled with light and tears, a tear trembles on her purple lips like a raindrop on a rose. The landscape background is unfortunately painted somewhat too much like a stage-setting, and its ill-connected distances are plainly weak to the eye. "The Presentation of Christ in the Temple" is also a very remarkable painting, in spite of the exaggeration of the figures placed in the foreground; but the head of Saint Simeon is full of divine feeling, and is marvel-

lously painted, while the Child Jesus is foreshortened in the most amazing manner. In a corner of the painting a dog, with its nose turned up sadly, seems to bay at the moon. Nothing explains the presence of this isolated animal, but Paolo Veronese's fondness for dogs, especially for greyhounds, is well known. He has put dogs in all his paintings, and the church of San Sebastiano happens to possess the one and only picture in which he did not put any, so that it is pointed out as a unique curiosity in the master's work. I was unable to verify for myself the accuracy of the statement, but as I think it over, it does seem to me that a painting by Paolo Veronese always recurs to one's mind accompanied by a white greyhound, just as a painting by Garofalo is always adorned and signed with his invariable carnation.

The purest gem of those picturesque diamonds is the "Martyrdom of Saint Mark and Marcellus, encouraged by Saint Sebastian." Art can scarce go farther, and this picture must be reckoned among the seven wonders of human genius. What marvellous colour and drawing in the group formed of a woman and a child, which the glance first falls upon as one looks at the picture! What ineffable emotion, what

celestial resignation overspread the faces of the two saints already radiant with the coming glory, and how charming is the woman's head seen in three-quarters above the shoulder of Saint Sebastian, — young, fair, filled with emotion, her glance sad and solicitous. The head, which is all that is visible of the figure, is so accurate in movement, so perfect in drawing, that the rest of the body can easily be guessed behind the group which conceals it; you can follow the lines down to the extremities, so exact is the anatomy. It is said that the Saint Sebastian is a portrait of Paolo Veronese himself, and the young girl that of his wife. They were both then in the flower of their age, and she had not yet bloomed out into the full, heavy, matronly beauty which is characteristic of her in the portraits we have of her — among others that in the Pitti Palace in Florence. The stuffs, the jewels, the accessories, all are finished with the extreme care and conscientious elaboration of early works, when an artist labours only to satisfy his genius and his art. It is almost immediately below this painting that the artist is buried. Never did a more brilliant lamp gleam over the shadow of the tomb, and

the masterpiece shines above the dead like a dazzling apotheosis.

The "Coronation of the Virgin" is shown in the midst of a blaze, a display, a sparkling of light which never existed save on Paolo Veronese's palette. In an atmosphere of molten gold and silver which passes through the hair of the Christ, floats in mid-air a Mary of such celestially human beauty that your heart beats as you bow your head. The "Coronation of Esther by Ahasuerus" is of incomparable grandeur and richness of tone. Here Paolo Veronese gave full scope to his splendid manner; pearls, satins, velvets, and brocades gleam, shimmer, sparkle, and are broken by luminous folds. The warrior in the foreground, careless of the anachronism of his armour, has a proud and manly port; the inevitable great dog is well placed, evidently thorough-bred, and feels that it is an honour to be painted by Paolo Veronese.

In the upper portion of the church, in a part almost invisible from below, there are great monochromes by the master painted with exceeding lightness and a very fine effect. Damp, time, and the lack of attention have begun to destroy them; an Austrian shell

which burst through the ceiling has scarred them with a broad cicatrice.

The sacristy also contains paintings by Veronese, but they belong to his early youth, when his yet timid genius was feeling its way.

There are several explanations of the prodigious number of paintings by him in this church: first, that he was specially devoted to Saint Sebastian; next, and more romantic, that having murdered a rival, he was compelled to seek refuge in this place, which he embellished out of gratitude during his long leisure hours; according to others again, the painter concealed himself for two years in San Sebastiano in order to escape the vengeance of a Senator, a caricature of whom he had exhibited on the Piazza San Marco. I repeat these stories for what they are worth, without taking the trouble to criticise them.

Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari is not in the hideous classical or Jesuit taste of which I was speaking a moment ago. Its ogees, its lancets, its Romanesque tower, its great walls of red brick give it a much more religious aspect. Above the doorway is a statue of the Saviour. The church, built by Nicolas Pisano, is of the year 1250. It is here that Canova is buried. The

monument which the artist had designed for Titian, modified in some respects, was used for him. I do not much admire it; it is pretentious, theatrical, and cold. At the foot of a green marble pyramid placed against the wall of a chapel gapes the black door of a vault, towards which winds a procession of statues placed on the steps of the monument; at the head walks a funeral figure, bearing a sepulchral urn; behind, genii and allegorical figures carrying torches and garlands of flowers. To counterbalance this portion of the composition, a great nude figure, which I believe is symbolical of the brevity of life, leans upon a torch which it is putting out, and the winged lion of Saint Mark sadly leans its head upon its paws in a pose analogous to that of Thorwaldsen's famous lion. Above the door two genii hold a medallion portrait of Canova. The monument is all the poorer and the meaner in idea and execution that the Santa Maria dei Frari is full of the most effective ancient monuments in the finest style.

The equestrian statue of General Colleoni, which looks uncommonly well upon a bronze horse, first strikes the eye as one comes up the canal to the small square at the back of which rises the Church di San

Giovanni e San Paolo. Although built in the thirteenth or fourteenth century, the church was not consecrated before 1430. The pediment of the façade is pretty, the circular arcade which surmounts it is wondrously carved with flowers and fruits. People go there chiefly to see "The Martyrdom of Saint Peter" by Titian, a painting so precious that it has been forbidden to sell it under penalty of death. I like this artistic ferocity; it is the only case in which it seems to me that capital punishment should be inflicted. Yet, other paintings by Titian seem to me as worthy as this one, in spite of its beauty, of such jealousy on the part of Venice, and I had formed an idea of it different and greater than the reality turned out to be. The scene is in a wood. Saint Peter has fallen; the executioner has caught him by the arm and is raising his sword; a priest flees in terror, and in the sky appear two angels ready to receive the martyr's soul. The executioner is admirably drawn; he threatens and insults in rare fashion; a brutal, furious expression marks his face; his eyes shine under a low brow like that of a tiger; his nostrils are dilated and scent blood. But perhaps there is too much terror and not enough resignation in the face of the Saint. He sees the sword only, the cold

steel of which will presently be thrust between his ribs, and he forgets that in the azure above soar celestial messengers with palms and crowns. He looks too much like an ordinary man condemned to death, whose throat is about to be cut and who is sorry for it. As for the monk, he is thoroughly frightened and filled with terror, but he does not run off properly. His body, much foreshortened, is ungainly; his legs are thrown back as he runs, his arms go one way and his head another. If the composition may be criticised, one has, on the other hand, to kneel in admiration before the magnificent landscape, so grand, so severe, so full of style, before the simple, manly, robust colouring, the broad and grand execution, the impassible masterliness of touch, the proud *maestria* which reveals the god of painting. Titian, as I have said, is the single artist whom the modern world can oppose to antiquity for calm strength, tranquil splendour, and eternal serenity.

I might mention the funeral monuments which cover the walls: the altar of San Domenichino, on which the history of the saint is modelled in a series of bronze *bassi-relievi* by Mazza of Bologna; Tintoretto's "Christ on the Cross;" the magnificent carvings

in the chapel of Santa Maria degli Rosi; the "Coronation of the Virgin," by Palma Vecchio; — but in a church where there is a Titian, you see nothing but Titian; he is the sun that extinguishes all the stars.

San Francesco della Vigna, with its red and white belfry, also deserves to be visited. There is near the church a curious cloister, enclosed with gratings of dark wood, which surrounds a sort of green filled with wild mallow, nettles, hemlock, asphodel, burdocks, and other plants found in ruins and cemeteries, among which rises a grotto of rock-work and shells, within which is placed an effigy of Saint Francis, in wood or coloured plaster, a sort of devotional toy or Jesuit's fancy. Under the damp and mouldy arches of the cloister, among the tombs worn by time and inscriptions which are illegible, I noticed on a stone slab a gondola carved in very low relief but still quite plain. It is placed over a gondoliers' vault like the tomb of the Zorzi of Cattaro in the church of San Sebastiano. Each *traghetto* thus had its own separate burial-place.

At San Francesco della Vigna I saw a painting by Fra Antonio da Negroponte, remarkable for its beauty and its preservation. It is the only one by that

painter which I have ever come across. I had never before heard his name, and yet it deserves to be known. The Virgin enthroned is dressed in a gown of gold brocade and a mantle figured with flowers painted in the most delicate manner. A little girl holds up the corner of the mantle with an air of ingenuous devotion, while the Virgin looks lovingly at the Child Jesus lying in her lap. The Virgin's head, with its exquisite delicacy, would do honour to Giovanni Bellini, Carpaccio, Perugino, Dürer, and the purest and most suave of the older masters. She is fair, and her golden hair, painted with great care, melts into the splendour of a trefoiled nimbus encrusted with precious stones after the Byzantine fashion. Above, from within the ultramarine of an artless paradise, the Eternal Father gazes upon the sacred group in a satisfied and majestic pose. Two handsome angels hold garlands of flowers, and behind the throne, covered with gold-work and enamels like that of an empress of the Lower Empire, bloom masses of roses and lilies which recall the sweet names given to the Virgin in the litany.

The work is painted with slow minuteness and infinite patience, which seem to have paid no heed to

time and which betray the ample leisure of the cloister; for Negroponte was a monk, as shown by the inscription upon the painting: "Pater Antonio Negroponte pinxit." But his extreme minuteness in no wise diminishes the grandeur of the impression or the imposing effect, while the richness of the colouring rivals the brilliancy of the gold and the ornaments in relief. It is at one and the same time an image and a jewel, as, in my opinion, paintings intended for the worship of the faithful should be. In that case art is improved by the hieratic and mysterious luxury of the idol. The Madonna of Fra Antonio da Negroponte at San Francesco della Vigna thoroughly fulfils these conditions, and stands perfectly being placed near "The Risen Christ" by Paolo Veronese, "The Martyrdom of Saint Laurent" by Santacroce, and the "Madonna" by Giovanni Bellini, which is one of his best works, though unfortunately it is placed in an obscure chapel.

One should not neglect to visit San Pantaleone, if only to see the huge ceiling painted by Fumiani, representing different episodes in the life of the saint, his martyrdom and his glorification. Since the days of monastic stiffness and missal-like artlessness of

Fra Antonio da Negroponte many years have passed and art has progressed. Whence is it, then, that this ceiling, which, so far as bold facility goes, equals Lemoine's ceiling in the Hall of Hercules and Luca Giordano's frescoes at the Escorial, leaves you cold in spite of the skilful foreshortening, of the elusive painting, and all the resources and tricks of execution? It is because in this case the means are the end, the hand works more quickly than the brain, and there is no soul in that vast composition suspended above your head like an actress at the Opera by plainly visible cords. The driest, most constrained, most unskilful Gothic possesses a charm which is lacking in all these great, mannered painters, so clever, so quick, so skilful, so expeditious in their mode of work.

In the Church of Santa Maria della Salute there is a superb ceiling by Titian, "The Murder of Abel by Cain," which is painted with masterly vigour and dash. It is at once calm and violent, like all the thoroughly successful works of this unrivalled painter. The church was built by Baldassare Longhena. The white cupolas have a very graceful curve. One hundred and thirty statues with flying draperies and ele-

gantly mannered poses surround the cornice. When I lived in the Hôtel de l'Europe a very pretty Eve, in the costume of her day, smiled at me every morning from that cornice in a rosy ray of sunshine which flushed her marble with modest blushes. Religion is not prudish in Italy, and it willingly puts up with nudity when it is sanctified by art.

I might continue indefinitely this pilgrimage from church to church, for they all contain treasures which deserve to be described; but I have no intention of writing a guide-book, so we shall go straight to the Scuole di San Rocco, an elegant building composed of two orders of superimposed Corinthian columns which at one-third of their height are coupled by an exceedingly pretty fillet.

San Rocco, as every one knows, enjoys the privilege of curing the plague, so he is greatly venerated in Venice, which is particularly exposed to the pest through its relations with Constantinople and the Levant. The statue of the saint shows upon the bare thigh a horrible, inflamed boil, for the saints are homœopaths and cure only the diseases which they suffer from. The plague is treated by a plague-stricken saint, ophthalmia by a martyr whose eyes have

been put out, and so on; it is really a case of *similia similibus*. Leaving the medical question aside, no doubt it was thought that these blessed personages would sympathise more deeply with evils from which they had suffered themselves.

In the Scuole di San Rocco there is a low hall painted throughout by Tintoretto, that tremendous worker, and on ascending a magnificent and monumental staircase by Scarpagnino, there are on the right and on the left, as if to justify the name and patronage of the plague-stricken saint, different scenes in the great Venetian epidemic which might illustrate the cholera in Paris. These cadaverous paintings are, those on the right by Antonio Zanchi, those on the left by Pietro Negri.

It is also in the Scuole di San Rocco that is to be seen the masterpiece of Tintoretto, that fertile and uneven artist who passed from the sublime to the wretched with prodigious facility. The immense painting represents in full development the bloody drama of Calvary. It occupies the whole of the end of a large hall. The sky, painted, no doubt, with that blue Egyptian ash which has played such unpleasant tricks on the artists of that day, has most unpleasant

false tones, which certainly could not have existed before that deceitful colour had darkened. It has also curiously darkened the background of the "Pilgrims at Emmaüs" by Paolo Veronese. The defect is quickly forgotten, however, so quickly do the groups in the foreground attract the attention of the spectator after he has looked at the picture for a moment. The Holy Women around the cross form the most profoundly despairing group that human grief can dream of; one of them, wrapped in her mantle, is prostrate, and sobs in the most pathetic and desolate fashion. A negro, who is endeavouring to raise the cross to which is fixed one of the thieves, is standing on tiptoe with an awkward, unnatural motion, but his figure is painted, like all the others, so vehemently and so furiously that you cannot help admiring it. Never did Rubens, Rembrandt, Géricault, or Delacroix in their most feverish and turbulent sketches, attain such dash, such rage, such ferocity. On this occasion Tintoretto fully deserved his surname Robusto. It is impossible to carry vigour farther. It is violent, exaggerated, melodramatic, but possessed of a supreme quality, strength. This painting, which shines with the splendour of sovereign art, makes one forgive the artist many acres

of the smoky, black canvases which one meets with in every palace, church, and gallery, and which are the work of a dyer rather than of a painter. The "Crucifixion" is dated 1565.

Before leaving, a very beautiful "Christ" by Titian must be looked at, for its deep expression of grief, and also some lovely altar doors carved in 1765 by Philiberti with exquisite delicacy and amazing perfection of work. These carvings, which are precious in spite of their modern date, represent different events in the life of San Rocco. The wood-work in the upper hall is also very remarkable, but if we are to admire everything, we shall never get through.

THE GHETTO—MURANO—VICENZA

ONE day I was wandering at haphazard through the unfrequented parts of Venice, for I like to learn something else about cities than that side of them which is drawn, described, and told by everybody, and I am always curious, having paid my legitimate tribute of admiration, to raise the mask of monuments which every city wears on its face by way of concealing its ugliness and its wretchedness. From lane to lane, by dint of crossing bridges and losing my way, I got beyond the Cannaregio into a Venice which is quite unlike the pretty Venice of water-colour paintings. Half-ruinous houses with windows boarded up, deserted squares, empty places on which clothes were drying upon cords and ragged children were playing, barren shores on which ship-wrights were calking boats amid thick clouds of smoke; abandoned churches smashed by Austrian shells, some of which had burst even at this extreme distance;

canals with green, stagnant water in which floated old mattresses and vegetable detritus, formed an *ensemble* of wretchedness, solitude, and neglect which made a painful impression upon me. Artificial towns conquered from the sea, like Venice, need riches and splendour; they require all the luxury of art and the magnificence of architecture to make up for the loss of nature. If a palace by Scammozzi, with its marble balconies, its pillars, and staircases, looks well on the banks of the Grand Canal, nothing, on the other hand, is more saddening than a wretched house falling to pieces between sky and water, and on the foundations of which crawl water-beetles and crabs.

I had been walking for some time through a labyrinth of lanes which often brought me back to my starting-point. I noticed with surprise the absence of all religious emblems at the corners of the streets. There were no chapels, no Madonnas adorned with *ex-votos*, no carved crosses on the squares, no effigies of saints, not one of the outward signs of devotion which are so frequent in the other quarters of the city. Everything looked strange, foreign, and mysterious. Curious forms glided furtively and slowly along the walls with an air of terror. Nor were the

faces of the Venetian type. Hooked noses, black eyes, sallow complexions, thin cheeks, pointed chins, all told of a different race. The wretched, shiny, dirty rags which these people wore were particularly sordid, and denoted cupidity rather than poverty, an avaricious wretchedness voluntary rather than involuntary, and calculated to inspire contempt rather than pity.

The lanes grew narrower and narrower; the houses rose like babels of superimposed hovels, as if in search of air that could be breathed and light to be reached above the shadow and the filth, in which crawled deformed beings. Several of these houses were nine stories high, — nine stories of rags, filth, and vile industries. All the forgotten diseases of the lazar-houses of the East seemed to cling to these deathly walls; the damp marked them with plague spots as if they were gangrened, the saltpetre efflorescence looked like the rugosities, warts, and boils of plague patients; the plaster broke away, like a diseased skin, in scaly pellicles. There was not a single perpendicular line; everything was out of plumb. The windows, blear-eyed, blind, or squinting, had not one whole pane; pieces of paper bound up as best they could the wounds of the glass. Poles like withered arms

shook indescribable rags above the passer-by; mattresses hideously soiled were endeavouring to dry in the sun on the edge of open, black windows. Here and there the remains of a cement formed of broken bricks and plaster gave to some of the façades less decrepit than the others an unwholesome redness like that which marks the cheek-bones of a consumptive patient or of low prostitute who has rouged her face. These houses were not among the least ugly and the least repulsive; they seemed to be health in death, vice in misery. Which is the more horrible, a perfectly livid body or one with its yellow face rubbed with vermilion?

Ruinous bridges, their arches bending like old men bowed down by the weight of years, and ready to fall into the water, connected these masses of shapeless hovels, separated by stagnant, muddy canals, black as ink, green as sanies, filled with filth and detritus of all kinds which the tide was powerless to carry off, for it could not stir the heavy, thick, stagnant water, which resembled a Stygian swamp or a river of hell.

At last I came upon a broad square, fairly paved, in the centre of which showed the open mouth of a cistern. At one of the corners rose an edifice of a more

human aspect, over the door of which was an inscription carved in Oriental letters, which I recognised as being Jewish characters. The riddle was solved. This fetid, purulent quarter was simply the Ghetto, the Jewry of Venice, which has preserved the sordidness characteristic of the Middle Ages.

Probably, if one were to enter these rotten, cracked houses rayed with loathsome mould, one might find in them, as in the Jewries of old, Rebeccas and Rachels of radiant Oriental beauty, stiff with gold and gems like Hindoo idols, seated on the most costly Smyrna carpets amid vases of gold and wondrous riches heaped together by paternal avarice; for the poverty of the Jew is merely external. If Christians indulge in sham luxury, Israelites indulge in sham poverty. Like certain insects, they roll themselves in the dirt and turn mud-colour in order to escape their persecutors. This habit, acquired in the Middle Ages, has never yet been lost by them, although nothing justifies it at present, but they keep it up with the unbending obstinacy of their race.

The building with the Hebraic inscription was a synagogue. I entered it. A fine staircase led me up into a large, oblong room wainscoted with well carved

woodwork and hung with splendid red damask of the Indies. The Talmud, just like the Koran, forbids its sectaries to reproduce the human form, and considers art an idolatrous practice; consequently the synagogue is as bare as a mosque or a Protestant temple, and cannot equal the splendour of Catholic cathedrals, however wealthy the faithful may be. Jewish worship, which is wholly an abstraction, is poor to the eye; — a pulpit for the rabbi who explains the Scriptures, a gallery for the singers who chant the psalms, a tabernacle in which are enclosed the Tables of the Law, and that is all.

I noticed in the Synagogue a great number of brass chandeliers adorned with balls and the arms twisted in the Dutch taste, such as are often seen in paintings by Gerard Dow and Mieris, especially in the painting of "The Paralytic," which engraving has made so popular. Probably these chandeliers came from Amsterdam, the northern Venice, which also contains many Jews. The superabundance of illumination is not surprising, for seven-branched candlesticks, lamps, and torches recur constantly in the Bible.

The Jewish cemetery is at the Lido. The sand covers it, vegetation grows over it, and children do

not scruple to trample and dance on the overturned or broken tombstones. When they are reproached with their irreverence, they artlessly reply, "They are only Jews." In their eyes a Jew and a dog are one and the same thing. The field is not a cemetery, it is a common sewer. In Spain, at Puerto de Santa Maria, I met with something of the same sort. A negro, an attendant in the bull ring, had just been killed by a bull. He had been carried away, and I was much moved. "Don't worry," said a neighbour to me, "it is only a negro." Yet, Jew or negro, they are men. But how long will it be before we can teach that fact to the children of barbarians?

The Christians sleep more peacefully on the small island of San Michele on the way to Murano. They are laid under the salt sand, which must be sweet to the bones of a Venetian, and the gondolas salute their crosses as they pass.

Murano has fallen from its antique splendour. It is no longer, as formerly, the wizard of imitation pearls, mirrors, and glassware. Chemistry has revealed its secrets; it no longer possesses the monopoly of beautiful bevelled mirrors, of tall glasses, of delicate flasks with milky spirals, of crystal balls that look like

tears of the sea, of glass beads which clink on the loin-cloths of Africans. Bohemia does just as good work, Choisy-le-Roi does better; art at Murano has remained stationary amid universal progress. I visited one of the glass-works where were being manufactured small coloured beads.

Murano contains another curiosity, which I was shown with some pride, — a horse, an animal more rare in Venice than the unicorn, the griffin, the chimera, or the flying ram of nightmares. In vain would Richard call, "A horse! a horse! my kingdom for a horse!" I rather enjoyed meeting that worthy quadruped, the existence of which I was beginning to forget. Meeting with it made me somewhat homesick for the mainland, and I returned to Venice very thoughtful. It struck me that it was a long while since I had seen plains or mountains, cultivated fields, roads bordered by trees, streets traversed by carriages; it seemed to me that nothing was pleasanter than the cracking of whips and the jingling of the bells of post-horses.

TRAVELS IN ITALY

PADUA

THE season was growing late, my stay in Venice had been prolonged beyond the limit which I had settled on in the general plan of my trip. I delayed my departure from week to week, from day to day, and always had some good reason for remaining. In vain did light vapours begin to rise in the morning over the lagoon, or sudden showers compel me to take refuge in a church; in vain when I wandered in the moonlight on the Grand Canal did the chill night-air force me sometimes to close the window of the gondola, — I insisted on setting at naught the warnings of autumn. I was always remembering a palazzo, a church, or a picture which I had not seen. I must visit, before leaving Venice, the white church of Santa Maria Formosa, made illustrious by the famous Santa Barbara, so splendidly posed, so heroically beautiful, which Palma Vecchio painted; and the palazzo of Bianca Capello, with its remembrances of a love-legend thoroughly Venetian and full of romantic

charm; the strange and splendid church of San Zaccaria, in which there are a marvellous altar-piece brilliant with gold by Antonio Vivarini, given by Helena Foscari and Marina Donato, and the tomb of the great sculptor Alessandro Vittoria, —

"Qui vivens vivos duxit de marmore vultus, —"

a splendidly conceited epitaph, justified for once by a world of statues.

Sometimes it was something else, — an island I had forgotten, Mazorbo or Torcello, which has a curious Byzantine basilica and Roman antiquities, or a picturesque façade on an unfrequented canal which I must sketch, — a thousand reasons of this kind, every one excellent, but which were not the real ones, although I did my best to believe they were. I yielded, in spite of myself, to the melancholy which seizes upon the most determined traveller when he is to leave, perhaps forever, a country he has long desired to see, a place where he has spent beautiful days and lovelier nights.

There are certain cities which one leaves as if they were a beloved friend, with swelling breast and tearful eyes; chosen countries where one is more easily happy than elsewhere, to which one dreams of returning to

die, and which shine in the sadness and the troubles of life like an oasis, an El Dorado; divine cities where the weary are at rest and to which remembrances fly back obstinately. Granada was for me one of these celestial Jerusalems which glow under a golden sun in the blue mirage of distance. I had thought of it since childhood, I left it with tears, and I very often regret it. Venice shall be for me another Granada, perhaps even more regretted.

Has it ever happened to you to have but a few days to spend with some beloved person? You look at her long, fixedly, sorrowfully, to grave her features deeply in your mind; you look at her in every way, study her in every light, notice every particular sign, — the little mole near the mouth, the dimple on the cheek or the hand; you note the inflections and the harmony of her voice; you try to preserve as much as you can of the adored face, which absence will take from you and which you will never again see but in your heart. You cannot be apart, you must be together up to the last moment; even sleep seems to be stolen from these precious hours, and the talk is endless as you sit hand in hand unaware that the light of the lamp is paling and the gray dawn filtering through the curtains.

This was just my feeling with regard to Venice. As the moment of departure approached, it became dearer to me, its full value revealed itself as I was about to lose it. I reproached myself with not having turned my stay to better account; I bitterly regretted a few hours of laziness, a few cowardly concessions to the enervating influence of the sirocco. It seemed to me that I might have seen more, taken more notes, made more sketches, trusted less to my memory; and yet, Heaven knows that I conscientiously fulfilled my duty as a tourist. I was to be met with everywhere, in churches, in galleries, at the Academy of the Fine Arts, on the Piazza San Marco, in the Palace of the Doges, in the Library. My weary gondoliers begged for rest. I scarcely took time to swallow an ice at the Café Florian or a soup of mussels and a *pasticcio* of *polenta* at the Gasthoff San Gallo or at the tavern of the Black Hat. In six weeks I had worn out three pairs of eyeglasses, a pair of opera-glasses, and lost a telescope. Never did any one indulge in such an orgy of sightseeing; I looked at things fourteen hours a day without a stop. If I had dared, I would have continued my visiting by torchlight.

During the last few days it became a regular fever with me. I made a general round, a review, on the

dead run, with the quick, sharp glance of a man who knows the thing he looks at and goes straight to what he wants. Like painters who ink the drawings which they do not wish rubbed out, I strengthened by a new remembrance the thousand sketches in my memory. I saw again the beautiful Ducal Palace, built purposely for a stage scene in a drama or an opera, with its great rose-coloured walls, its white lacework, its two stories of pillars, its Arab trefoils; wonderful San Marco, the Saint Sophia of the West, the colossal reliquary of Venetian civilisation, a gilded cavern, diapered with mosaics, a vast heaping up of jasper, porphyry, alabaster, and fragments of antiquity, a pirate cathedral enriched with the spoils of the universe; the Campanile, which bears so high within the heavens the golden angel, protector of Venice, and guards at its feet Sansovino's Loggetta carved like a gem; the Clock Tower, gold and blue, on which, on a great dial, meander the black and white hours; the Library, Athenian in its elegance, crowned with graceful mythological statues, sweet remembrance of neighbouring Greece; and the Grand Canal, bordered by a double row of Gothic, Moorish, Renaissance, and rococo palaces, whose ever varying façades amaze one by the inexhaustible fancy

and the perpetual invention of the details, which it would take more than a man's whole life to study; a splendid gallery in which is exhibited the genius of Sansovino, Scamozzi, Pietro Lombardi, Palladio, Longhena, Bergamasco, Rossi, Tremignana, and other wondrous architects, to say nothing of the unknown and humble workmen of the Middle Ages, who are not the least admirable. I went in my gondola from the Dogana Point to Quintavalle Point in order to fix forever in my memory that fairy sight which painting is as powerless to render as are words, and I devoured with desperate attention the mirage of the Fata Morgana about to vanish forever so far as I was concerned.

Now, as I am about to bring to a close this account, already too long, perchance, it seems to me that I have told nothing and that I have but feebly expressed my enthusiasm and given but a poor copy of my splendid models. Every monument, every church, every gallery calls for a volume, and I can scarcely afford a page. Yet I have spoken only of what is visible; I have avoided removing the dust from the old chronicles, reviving forgotten remembrances, peopling with their former inhabitants the deserted palaces; — for that would have been a life work.

And now, at any cost, I must go. Padua, the city of Ezzelino and of Angelo, calls me. Farewell, dear Campo San Moisè, where I have spent such lovely hours; farewell to the sunsets of the Salute, the moonlight effects on the Grand Canal, the beautiful, golden-haired girls of the Public Gardens, the pleasant dinners under the vines of Quintavalle! Farewell to the glorious art and the magnificent painting, to the splendid palaces of the Middle Ages, to Palladio's Greek façades! Farewell to the doves of San Marco and the gulls of the lagoon, to the sea baths on the Lido shore, to the trips in gondolas. Farewell forever, and if forever, still forever fare ye well! The railway has carried us off, and already the Venus of the Adriatic has plunged her rose and white body within the azure sea.

Padua is an ancient city which looks well against the horizon, with its belfries, domes, and old walls on which swarms a multitude of lizards. Placed too near a centre which draws all life to itself, Padua is a dead city, and looks almost deserted. Its streets, bordered by two rows of low arcades, are sad, and nothing recalls the elegant and graceful Venetian architecture. The heavy, massive buildings have a somewhat sour

seriousness, and the sombre porches at the foot of the houses look like black mouths yawning with weariness.

I was taken to a huge inn, probably a palace in olden days, the great remains of which, dishonoured by vulgar use, must of yore have seen better company. It was a journey from the hall to my room through numberless stairs and passages; a map or Ariadne's thread was needed to find the way.

My windows opened upon a fair prospect. The Brachiglione flowed at the foot of the wall, its banks lined with old houses and long walls, above which rose trees. Lines of stakes from which fishermen cast their lines with the patience characteristic of the breed in every country, huts with nets, and clothes drying at the windows, formed a pretty subject for a water-colour drawing.

After dinner I went to the Café Pedrocchi, famous throughout Italy for its magnificence. It is classical, monumental, full of pillars and columns, of ova and palmettos, in the style of Percier and Fontaine, all very large and very much in marble. The most curious things about it are great geographical maps which replace hangings and represent the different countries of the world on a large scale. This somewhat pedan-

tic decoration gives an academic air to the room, and one would not be surprised to see a desk in the place of the counter, with a professor in his gown instead of the master of the café. But as Padua is a university town, it is quite proper that the students should be able to continue their studies while drinking their coffee or eating their ices.

The University of Padua was famous formerly. In the thirteenth century eighteen thousand youths, a nation of students, followed the courses of its learned professors, among whom later was Galileo, one of whose vertebræ is preserved as a relic, — a relic of a martyr who suffered for truth. The façade of the University building is very handsome; four Doric columns give it a severe and monumental aspect; but the class-rooms are empty and scarcely one thousand students now frequent them.

The next day I proceeded to visit the cathedral dedicated to Saint Anthony, who enjoys at Padua the position of Saint Januarius at Naples. He is the *genius loci*, the saint venerated above all others. If Cazenova may be believed, he was in the habit of working no less than thirty miracles a day. Certainly he deserved his surname Thaumaturgist, but his prodigious zeal has

considerably fallen off. However, the credit of the saint has in no wise diminished, and so many masses are ordered at his altar that the priests at the cathedral and the days of the year are insufficient to say them. To settle up matters, the Pope has permitted that at the end of the year masses shall be said every one of which is as good as a thousand, and in this way Saint Anthony does not disappoint his faithful worshippers.

On the square near the cathedral rises a fine bronze equestrian statue by Donatello, the first cast since the days of antiquity, representing Gattomelato, a chief of condottieri, a brigand who unquestionably does not deserve such an honour; but the artist has given him a splendid port and a proud look, with his Roman emperor's baton, and that is quite enough.

The church of San Antonio is composed of a number of cupolas and bell towers, and a great brick façade with triangular pediment, above which rises a gallery with ogees and pillars. Three small doors cut in the high arcade correspond to the three naves. The interior is excessively rich, and is filled with chapels and tombs in different styles. It contains specimens of the art of various epochs, from the naïve, religious, and delicate art of the Middle Ages to the most extraordi-

nary fancies of the rococo style. The cloister is paved with funeral slabs, and the walls disappear under the monuments which cover them. I read a number of the epitaphs, which were very fine, the Italians having preserved the secret of lapidary Latin.

Santa Giustinia is a huge church with a bare façade and an interior so plain as to be dull and mean. Good taste is certainly desirable, but not too much of it, and I must say I prefer to such bareness the mad exuberance and the exaggerated scrolls of the rococo style. A fine altar-piece by Paolo Veronese relieves the nudity. If the church is dull and characterless, the same cannot be said of the two giant monsters which guard it, lying on the steps like faithful mastiffs. Never did Japanese monsters present a more terrifying aspect than these fantastic animals, which are something like hideous griffins, with the hind-quarters of lions, the wings of eagles, and stupid, fierce heads, ending in beaks pierced with oblique nostrils like those of tortoises. These monstrous animals press to their breasts, between their talons, a warrior on horseback wearing mediæval armour, and crush him with slow pressure, with a vague look and without troubling about the convulsive efforts of the myrmidon thus stifled.

What is the meaning of the knight caught with his steed in the dread claws of these crouching monsters? What myth is concealed under that sombre sculptural fancy? Do these groups illustrate a legend, or are they simply the sinister hieroglyphs of fatality? I could not make out, and no one could or would tell me. The other day, on glancing over the album which Prince Soltykoff brought back from India, I found in the propylæa of a Hindoo pagoda exactly similar monsters crushing an armed man against their breast. Whatever may be the real meaning of these terrifying groups, they recall confusedly vague remembrances of cosmogonic combats, battles between the two principles of good and evil, — Ahriman overcoming Ormuzd, Siva overthrowing Vishnu. Later on, under the porch of the cathedral at Ferrara, I again saw these two chimeras, but this time it was lions they were crushing.

There is one thing one must not neglect to do in Padua, and that is to pay a visit to the Madonna dell' Arena, a church situated within a rich and luxuriant garden, and which would certainly never be found if one were not told of it. The whole of the interior was painted by Giotto. No gallery, no ribbing, no

architectural division breaks the vast tapestry of the frescoes. The general aspect is of a sweet, starry azure, like a beautiful, calm sky; blue is the keynote and gives the local tone. Thirty compartments of great size, separated by mere lines, contain scenes of the life of the Virgin and of her divine Son in detail. They look like miniatures in a gigantic missal. The personages, through an artless anachronism most precious to historians, are dressed in the costume of Giotto's day.

Below these compositions, charming in their suavity and exhibiting the purest religious feeling, a painted plinth exhibits the seven capital sins symbolised ingenuously, and other allegorical figures in excellent style. A "Paradise" and a "Hell," subjects which greatly preoccupied the artists of that day, complete this marvellous *ensemble*. There are quaint and touching details in these paintings: children emerge from their little coffins and ascend to Paradise with eager joy, springing forward to play upon the flowery meads of the celestial gardens; others hold out their hands to their half-resuscitated mothers. I noticed that all the devils and vices were stout, while the angels and virtues were slender and thin. The painter thus denoted

the preponderance of matter in some, and of mind in others.

Let me note here a picturesque and physiological remark. The type of the Paduan women differs greatly from that of the Venetians. In spite of the nearness of the two cities, the Paduan beauty is more severe and more classical. Thick brown hair, well marked eyebrows, a serious, dark glance, a pale olive complexion, a somewhat full oval, recall the main features of the Lombard race. The black cape which these lovely women wear gives them, as they glide slowly along the deserted arcades, a proud and shy look which contrasts with the faint smile and the easy Venetian grace.

On the Piazza Salone stands the Palace of Justice, a great building in the Moorish style, with galleries, pillars, and denticulated crenellations, which contains the largest room in the world perhaps, and recalls the Palace of the Doges at Venice. At the Scuole del Santo there are glorious frescoes by Titian, the only ones which this painter is known to have executed. There also are shown the instruments of torture, the racks, strapados, pincers, boots, toothed wheels, saws, axes, which were used upon the victims of Ezzelino, the most famous tyrant that ever lived, by the side of whom

Angelo is an angel of light. I had a letter to the amateur who looks after this curious collection fit for an executioner's museum. I did not find him, to my great regret, and I left the same afternoon for Rovigo, quitting regretfully the delightful Lombardo-Venetian kingdom, which lacks nothing save liberty.

FERRARA

AN omnibus took us in a few hours from Padua to Rovigo, which we reached in the evening. While waiting for supper, I wandered through the streets of the city lighted by a silvery moon which enabled me to make out the outline of the monuments. Low arcades, like those of the old Place Royale in Paris, border the streets, and the alternations of light and shadow formed long cloisters which that evening recalled the effect of the stage setting of the Nuns' act in "Robert le Diable." A few stray passers-by glided silently along like shadows; sorrowful dogs bayed to the moon, and the city seemed asleep. Every window was dark, with the exception of a few cafés still lighted, in which customers, with a weary, somnolent look, were eating ices and drinking coffee or a glass of water, slowly, wisely, methodically, often stopping to read a meaningless newspaper article, like people who have lots of time to waste and try to get along until it is time to go to bed.

The trip from Rovigo to Ferrara is in no wise picturesque, — a flat country with cultivated fields and Northern trees, exactly like a French department. The Po, with its yellow waters, is crossed; the low, bare shores faintly recalling those of the Guadalquivir below Seville. The turbulent Eridano, lacking the tribute of the melting snow, seemed calm and peaceful enough at the time.

Ferrara rises solitary in the centre of a flat country, which is rich rather than picturesque. On entering by the main street which leads to the square, the aspect of the city is imposing and monumental. A palace, reached by great steps, stands on the corner of this vast space. I suppose it must be the Court-house or City Hall, for people of all kinds came in and went out of the great doors.

While I was wandering in the streets, satisfying my curiosity at the expense of my appetite and stealing from the sixty minutes given us for breakfast forty to regale my eyes and fulfil my duty as a tourist, a strange apparition rose suddenly before me, as unexpectedly as a ghost at midday. It was a sort of spectre masked with a black mask, its head covered with a black hood, its body wrapped in a gown, or rather a

domino, braided with red, with a red cross on the shoulder, a brass crucifix hung around the neck, and a red sash. It rattled in silence a small box in which money was jingling. This scarecrow, which had nothing living about it but the eyes which shone through the holes in its mask, shook two or three times before me its box, in which, terrified, I dropped a handful of *bajocchi*, not knowing for what charitable work this lugubrious figure was begging. He resumed his way without a word, with the most sinister, funereal clinking of iron and money, holding out his box, in which everybody hastened to drop some small coin. I inquired to what order belonged this phantom, more terrifying than the monks and ascetics of Zurbaran, who thus walked about like a horrid, nocturnal vision in the bright sunshine, realising in the street the nightmare of bad nights. I was told that he was a penitent of the Brotherhood of Death, begging money for the purchase of coffins and for the purpose of saying masses for poor devils who were to be shot down that very day, — brigands or Republicans, I have really forgotten which. These penitents have taken on themselves the sad and charitable task of accompanying those who are condemned to death to the

place of execution, to be with them in their last moments, to remove from the scaffold the mutilated body, to place it in a bier, and to bury it in a Christian manner. It is townspeople who devote themselves through piety to these painful functions, and thus mingle a tender, though vague and masked element with the cold, implacable sacrifices of justice. These spectres seem to stand between the victim and the executioner. They are the timid protest made by humanity. Often these Sisters of Mercy of the scaffold turn faint and are more troubled than the condemned man himself.

Italy has preserved largely the methods of Doctor Sangrado, and the breed of doctors whose system is developed in kitchen Latin in the ceremony of the "Malade imaginaire" has not yet disappeared. I say this with due reservation of talents of the first order. There are in the Peninsula numerous duplicates of Messieurs Purgon, Diafoirus, Macrotin, Desfonandrès, and other doctors of Molière's creation. People are bled severely for the least indisposition. The barbers are the operators, so on their shops are seen paintings most surgically fantastic, and in these bloody subjects the painters do not hesitate at any violence of tone, and imagine contrasts which amaze colourists.

FERRARA

It was market day, which gave some animation to the city, usually so dull. I saw nothing characteristic in the way of costumes. Uniformity is overrunning everything. The peasants of the neighbourhood of Ferrara are very like ours, but for the Southern brilliancy of their black eyes and a certain pride of port which reminds you that you are on classical ground. Autumn products, grapes, pumpkins, pimentoes, tomatoes, mixed with coarse pottery and rustic household utensils, were heaped up on the square, amid which were groups of people talking and buying. A few oxcarts, much less primitive than those of Spain, a few asses with wooden pack-saddles, were waiting with melancholy patience until their masters had finished their business and were ready to return home. The oxen, lying down, were peacefully chewing the cud; the asses were grazing the blades of grass growing between the paving-stones.

One thing peculiar to Italy is the open-air money-changers. Their outfit is exceedingly simple, and consists of a stool and a small table on which are ranged piles of *scudi*, *bajocchi*, and other coins. The changer, crouched like a dragon, watches his little treasure with a restless, yellow eye which exhibits constant dread of thieves, who are not kept away by any gratings.

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age, appears to be brand-new. It is white and rose, pretty rather than solemn, somewhat troubadour; in short, recalling the feudal clocks of the days of the Restoration. The castle of the Dukes of Ferrara, which is built of bricks and of stones turned red by the sun, has a bright, juvenile air which detracts from its imposing effect. It resembles too closely the stage-setting of a melodrama.

It was in this castle that lived the famous Lucrezia Borgia, whom Victor Hugo has depicted as so monstrous, while Ariosto speaks of her as a model of chastity, grace, and virtue, — the fair Lucrezia, who wrote letters breathing the purest love, and some of whose silky, golden hair Lord Byron possessed. There occurred the dramas of Tasso, of Ariosto, and of Guarini; there were held the brilliant orgies, mingling poisons and murders, which were characteristic of that period in learned, artistic, refined, and wicked Italy.

It is proper to visit piously the very doubtful cell wherein Tasso, crazed by love and grief, spent so many years, according to the poetic legend which has arisen since his day. I had no time to do so, and I did not regret it much. The cell, of which I have a very accurate drawing before me, has only its four walls

with a low ceiling. At the back there is a window grated with thick bars and an iron-studded door with heavy bolts. It is most unlikely that in this obscure hole, covered with cobwebs, Tasso was able to work over his poems, to compose sonnets, to trouble about the details of his dress, such as the quality of the velvet of his beretta and the silk of his stockings, or to worry about cookery either, such as the kind of sugar which he wanted for his salad, that served him not being fine enough, in his opinion. Nor did I see Ariosto's house, — another obligatory pilgrimage. Apart from the little credit which can be given to these unauthenticated traditions, to these characterless relics, I would rather seek for Ariosto in the "Orlando Furioso," and for Tasso in "Jerusalem Delivered" or Goethe's splendid drama.

Life in Ferrara is concentrated on the Piazza Nuove, in front of the church, and around the castle. Life has not yet withdrawn from the heart of the city, but as you go farther from that point, the pulsations grow weaker, paralysis begins, death grows; silence, solitude, and grass take possession of the streets. You feel that you are wandering through a Thebaïd peopled by the shadows of the past, from which the living have

disappeared like water that has dried up. There is nothing so sad as to see the body of a city falling slowly into dust in the sunshine and the rain; human bodies at least are buried.

Bologna is a city with arcaded streets, like most cities in this part of Italy. They are useful as a shelter from the rain and sunshine, but they transform the streets into long cloisters, absorb the light, and give the towns a cold and melancholy aspect.

I had a letter of recommendation for Rossini, who unfortunately was absent and would return only a few days later.

I followed at chance a street which led me safely into the square, where have been leaning for years without ever falling the Torre delli Asinelli and the Garisenda, which had the honour of furnishing an image to Dante. The great poet compares Antæus bending towards the earth to the Garisenda, which proves that the inclination of the tower of Bologna goes back to the thirteenth century. These towers, seen by moonlight, had a most fantastic aspect. Their strange deviation from the plumb, giving the lie to all the laws of statics and perspective, makes you giddy, and causes the other buildings in the neighbourhood to

squareness brings out wonderfully the elegant lines of the arches and the pillars. Its principal charm is that, symmetrical in itself, it obeys the law of intersequence, which governs the monuments that surround it and which it interrupts. This diversity gives to the square a brightness which would have been quickly replaced by monotony, if the arches had been repeated on each side. The capitals of the pillars of the Loggia are in a Gothic and fantastic Corinthian style, in which the rules of Vitruvius have not been carried out. This fact in no wise diminishes their grace and their happy proportions. An open-worked balustrade crowns the building, which ends in a terrace of delicate and light design. Its name, Loggia dei Lanzi, dates from the time when the German spearmen or lancers had a barracks not far from there. Its purpose was to shelter the towns-people from sudden showers, and to enable them to converse on their business and that of the city. It was under this gallery, raised a few feet above the level of the square, that magistrates were invested with their functions, knights created, decrees of the government published, and the people harangued as from a tribune.

The Loggia is a sort of open-air museum. The "Perseus" by Benvenuto Cellini, the "Judith" by

FERRARA

At four o'clock the next morning I dressed very sleepily to take the stage-coach for Florence. I observed a certain movement among the troops. It was an execution which was preparing. Some twenty people were to be shot that morning for political reasons. I left Bologna with the same painful impression which I had experienced at Verona and Ferrara and which awaited me at Rome; — but the thought of crossing the Apennines on that fine September day soon cleared away the lugubrious feeling.

TRAVELS IN ITALY

FLORENCE

THE road from Bologna to Florence crosses the Apennines, the backbone of Italy. There are certain names which cast a spell, even upon travellers most accustomed to disappointments. The name of the Apennines is of them. Unquestionably the mania for making comparisons is a mistake, and it is unjust to expect one place to be other than it is; but I could not help, from the top of the stage-coach, thinking of the beautiful Spanish Sierras of which no one speaks and whose unknown beauty is far grander than that of the Italian mountains, which are perhaps overpraised. I recalled a trip from Granada to Veles-Malaga across the mountains, along a lonely track traversed by scarcely more than a couple of travellers in the course of the year, and which surpasses all that can be imagined in the way of effects of outline, light, and colour. I thought also of my excursion into Kabylia, of the mountains gilded by the African sun, of the valleys full of rose laurel,

mimosas, arbutus, and mastic trees, through which strayed rivulets inhabited by little tortoises; of the Kabyle villages surrounded with fences of cactus, and of the broken horizon lines, over which rose always the mighty mass of Djourdjoura; and positively the Apennines seemed to me mediocre in spite of their classical reputation.

Although the road never climbs such abrupt steeps as those of Salinas and Descarga in Spain, the hills are sometimes bad enough to make it necessary to employ oxen. It was an ever new pleasure to me to see the slow animals come along, their heads bowed under the yoke, their glistening noses, their great peaceful eyes, their strong legs. To begin with, they were always picturesque in themselves, and then there was always with them a rustic, wild oxherd, often of fine mien, with tousled hair, steeple hat, and brown jacket, carrying his goad like a sceptre. Besides, oxen to me always mean a rough tableland, a high plateau whence one enjoys unexpectedly a vast prospect, a blue panorama of plains, mountains, and valleys, the horizon full of towns and villas shimmering in the light and shadow.

As the slopes of the Apennines begin to sink towards Florence, the landscape improves in beauty. Villas

show upon the sides of the road, black cypresses rise arrow-like, Italian pines outspread their green tops, olive trees open their gray, sad foliage. There is a bustle of foot-passengers, horses, and carriages, betokening the approach to a great, living city, a rare thing in Italy, that ossuary of dead cities.

Night had fallen when we arrived at the San Gallo Gate. For a city of pleasure and festivals, whose very name is scented like a nosegay, Florence received us in so strange a fashion that more superstitious persons might have been repelled by the apparent evil omen.

In the very first street into which the stage-coach entered, we met an apparition as dreadful as that of the Cortès of Death met by the ingenious knight of La Mancha in the neighbourhood of Toboso; only in our case it was not the decoration of an *auto sacramental*, but a horrid reality. Two files of black spectres, masked, bearing resinous torches which shed a lurid light with much thick smoke, walked, or rather ran behind and before a catafalque borne on men's shoulders, and the outline of which could be vaguely made out in the dun-coloured cloud of the funeral lights. One of these spectres sounded a bell, and all murmured with *bocca chiusa* under the beard of their masks the

prayers for the dead in broken, stifled rhythm. A single black spectre would issue from a house and hastily join the sombre flock, which soon disappeared at the corner of a street. It was a brotherhood of Black Penitents who, according to their custom, were following a funeral.

As soon as it was day, I looked out of the window to study the prospect unrolled before my eyes. The Arno, muddy and yellow, flowed between two stone quays, leaving half of its bed bare and showing in places the slimy bottom strewn with potsherds, rubbish, and detritus of all kinds. The spell of Italian names, which we meet with set in the verse of poets, is so great that their sonorous syllables always awaken in the mind an idea different from their aspect in reality. In spite of one's self, one imagines the Arno as a stream with silvery waters, flowery, verdant banks reached from terraces by marble staircases, and traversed at night by boats bearing lights, their Turkish carpets dipping in the tide, and sheltering under their silken awnings pairs of lovers. The truth is that the Arno should rather be called a torrent than a stream. It flows intermittently according to the caprice of the wet or dry weather, sometimes overflowing, sometimes a

mere thread, and in Florence it resembles more the scene between the Pont de l'Hôtel-Dieu and the Pont-Neuf than anything else. A few fishermen standing in the water nearly up to their knees alone imparted any animation to the river, which on account of the constant change of height, carries only flat-boats; which is the more regrettable that the sea is very close, the Arno flowing into it after having traversed Pisa.

The houses on the opposite side of the quay were tall, of a sober and not very cheerful architecture. A few domes and distant church-towers alone broke the horizontal line. I caught sight, above the roofs of the buildings, of the hill of San Miniato with its church and its cypresses, the name of which had remained fixed in my mind, although I had never been to Florence, after I had read Alfred de Musset's "Lorenzaccio," the twenty-fifth scene of which is thus designated: "Before the church of San Miniato at Mount Olivet."

The handsome Ponte Santa Trinita, designed by Ammenato, rebuilt by Bartolommeo Ammanati, spanned to the right the river with its three light surbased arches. It thus offers less hold to the water in time of flood and inundation. It is adorned with statues of

the Four Seasons, which from a distance have a fairly monumental effect. On the left was the Ponte alla Carraja, one of the oldest in Florence, for it goes back to the thirteenth century. Destroyed by an inundation, it was rebuilt by Ammanati.

The general aspect of Florence, contrary to the idea which one has of it, is sad. The streets are narrow, the houses high, the façades sombre and lacking the Southern brightness which one expects to meet with. The city of pleasure, the summer residence of rich and elegant Europe, has a cross and dissatisfied look. Its palaces resemble prisons and fortresses. Every house seems to intrench itself and to defend itself against the street. The imposing, serious, solid architecture with very few openings has preserved the mistrust characteristic of the Middle Ages and seems to be constantly prepared for some sudden attack of the Pazzi or the Strozzi.

The Greeks had a particular way of expressing in a single word the central or important place in a city or country, — *ophthalmos* (the eye). Every great capital has its eye. In Rome it is the Campo Vaccino, in Paris the Boulevard des Italiens, in Venice the Piazza San Marco, in Madrid the Prado, in London the

in a large open space equivalent to what the Spaniards would call the *Salon* of this fashionable drive. The great masses of verdure, bordered on the one hand by the gently flowing stream of the Arno, on the other framed in by the blue Apennines, the distant masses of which are seen dotted with villas and hamlets, compose in the splendid Southern light an admirable *ensemble* which it is difficult to forget. The Cascine has something more artlessly rural than its companion drives in Paris and London, and the influx of foreign elegance does not deprive it of an Italian simplicity graceful in its nonchalance. A very simple and quiet country house belonging to the Grand Duke is buried within this cool verdure, which Southern people appreciate more than we do, no doubt, on account of its rarity. In Spain I met with similar admiration for the shades of the Park at Aranjuez watered by the Tagus and filled with Northern trees.

Some years ago, Florence, especially before political events had driven away rich tourists, was the drawing-room of Europe. Thither, from all points of the horizon, came the Englishman flying from his native fogs, the Russian throwing off the snows of a six-months winter, the Frenchman bound on the fashionable tour,

must be bordered by different buildings of varied heights. Tall buildings are elegant, and suitably circumscribe a square. Every detail can then be made out. It is just the difference between a painting standing up and a painting lying down, upon which you have to walk in order to see it.

The Piazza della Signoria at Florence combines all the conditions of architectural picturesqueness, unity, and variety. Bordered by buildings which are regular in themselves but different one from another, it satisfies the eye without wearying it by cold symmetry. The Palazzo della Signoria, or Palazzo Vecchio, which at once attracts attention through its imposing mass and its severe elegance, stands at one of the corners of the square instead of being in the centre. This curious position, fortunate in my opinion, but regretted by those who can see nothing beautiful in architecture save geometric regularity, is not due to chance, but to a thoroughly Florentine reason. In order to attain perfect symmetry, it would have been necessary to build upon the detested ground belonging to the Ghibelline rebels, the proscribed house of Uberti. The Guelph faction, then all powerful, would not allow the architect, Arnolfo di Lapo, to do so. There are

scholars who have cast doubts upon this tradition; I shall not discuss the question here. What is quite certain is that the Palazzo Vecchio is much improved by the peculiarity of its position and thus leaves space for the grand Fountain of Neptune and the equestrian statue of Cosimo I.

The Palazzo Vecchio ought really to be called a fortress. It is a great mass of stone, without pillars, without façade, without architectural orders, forming a sort of huge square tower somewhat longer than it is wide, dentellated with battlements, and topped by a look-out which projects fairly well out. The stories are marked by ogival windows which cut like loop-holes the thick walls of the massive edifice, and in the centre, like the donjon in the centre of a fortress, rises a high, crenellated belfry with a dial on the face which looks upon the square.

Time has gilded the walls with beautiful golden and russet tones, that contrast superbly with the clear blue sky, and the whole building has a haughty, romantic, fierce aspect that fully comes up to the idea which one has formed of the old Palazzo della Signoria, that has witnessed, since the thirteenth century, when it was built, so many intrigues, riots, violent deaths,

and crimes. The battlements of the palace, squarely built, show that it was carried to that height by the Guelph faction; the bifurcated battlements of the belfry indicate a reaction and the accession to power of the Ghibelline faction. Guelphs and Ghibellines hated each other so intensely that they proclaimed their opinion in the fashion of their clothing, in the manner they cut their hair, in the way they fortified their homes. They dreaded nothing so much as to be mistaken one for the other, and made as marked a difference as they could between themselves. They had a private greeting, after the manner of the Free Masons and the Companions of Duty. By the characteristic crenellations, we may recognise in the old palaces of Florence the opinions of the former owners. The walls of the city are crenellated squarely after the Guelph fashion, and the tower of the ramparts opposite the Mall has the swallow-tailed Ghibelline crenellations.

Under the arches which support the upper portion of the palace are painted in fresco the arms of the people of the Commune and Republic of Florence. After the expulsion of the Duke of Athens, whose romantic title makes one think of Shakespeare's "Midsummer Night's Dream," Florence was divided into four quarters and

sixteen banners, four standards to a quarter, and each had its arms.

The substructure of the Palazzo Vecchio consists of steps which formerly were used as a tribune from which the magistrates and demagogues harangued the people.

Two marble colossi, "Hercules and Cacus," by Baccio Bandinelli, and Michael Angelo's "David," stand on guard by the gate like two giant sentries whose relief has forgotten them. Bandinelli's "Hercules" and Michael Angelo's "David," have been subjected to criticism and admiration which do not appear to be entirely just. In my opinion, Bandinelli has been too much depreciated and Michael Angelo overpraised. The "Hercules and Cacus" has a haughty pride, a fierce energy, a feeling of grandeur, which mark the artist of the first rank. Never did Florentine exaggeration carry farther its swelling violence and its boastful anatomy. The network of muscles which uplift the monstrous shoulders is of amazing force, and Michael Angelo himself, when he saw this part moulded separately, could not refrain from approving of it. The torso of the Hercules has been greatly criticised by contemporary artists and sightseers. It is true that

every detail is wrought out to exaggeration, the deltoid and pectoral muscles, the mastoidean ligaments, the modelling and the projection of the ribs, are brought out in extreme relief. It is an anatomical preparation carried to the third power; the artist has forgotten to put a skin over the bumps and projections, or rather, he would not do it; hence the comparison of the torso to a sack full of pine-cones. The reproach, which is not undeserved, might be addressed to many another Florentine artist, and even to the great Buonarotti.

Michael Angelo's "David," besides the fact that it represents in gigantic form a Biblical hero whose stature was notoriously short, seems to me rather heavy and commonplace, an infrequent defect in a master so rigorously elegant. David is a great, stout, healthy fellow, strong-backed, provided with solid pectoral muscles and monstrous biceps, a powerful porter waiting to load a sack on his back. The way the marble is worked is remarkable, and on the whole it is a good study which would do honour to any other sculptor than Michael Angelo, but it lacks the Olympic and formidable *maestria* which is the characteristic of the productions of that superhuman sculptor. I am bound to add that the artist was not fully free. He

drew his David from a huge block of Carrara marble which had been cut a hundred years before by Simeone da Fiesole, who had tried to make of it a colossus, but had failed. Michael Angelo, then twenty-nine years of age, took up the work, and as he played with it, found a giant statue amid the shapeless attempts of Simeone da Fiesole. Some defects of proportion in the limbs, — a lack of marble, — and chisel marks plainly seen on the shoulders, denote the difficulty the great sculptor experienced in carrying out this singular *tour de force*, which consisted in putting one statue into the skin of another. Michael Angelo alone could indulge so strange a fancy.

Two other statues ending in Hermes, the one by Bandinelli, the other by Rossi, were formerly used as chain posts. That by Rossi represents a man ending in an oak trunk, as a symbol of Tuscan magnanimity and strength; Bandinelli's, a woman with a crown on her head and her feet caught in a laurel, the symbol of the supremacy in arts and courtesy of this happy land. Above the gate two lions support a cartouche with rays bearing this inscription: —

"Jesus Christ, Rex Florentini Populi, S. P. decreto electus."

As a matter of fact, Christ was elected King of Flor-

ence on the motion of Nicolo Capponi in the Council of One Thousand, with the hope of securing popular tranquillity, for Christ could not be supplanted or replaced by any one. Nevertheless, this ideal presidency did not prevent the overthrowing of the Republic.

The outer court, into which one enters through this gate, was restored by Michelozzo. His Renaissance taste blooms out in the architecture. Elegant columns supporting arches form a *patio* such as you find in Spanish houses. A fountain by the sculptor Taddi, from the designs of Vasari, built by order of Cosimo I, is placed in the centre and completes the likeness. The basin is of porphyry; the water springs from the mouth of a fish choked by a beautiful bronze child, the work of Andrea Mocchi. Above the arcades are painted in fresco trophies, spoils, weapons, and prisoners chained to medallions which bear the arms of Florence and of the Medici.

One of the most interesting rooms in the Palazzo Vecchio is the great hall, which is of enormous dimensions and has its legend. When the Medici were driven away from Florence in 1494, Fra Girolamo Savonarola, who was at the head of the popular uprising, suggested the building of a vast hall in which the

council of one thousand citizens could elect the magistrates and settle the affairs of the Republic. The architect Cronaca was charged with the work and carried it out with such marvellous celerity that Fra Savonarola caused the report to be spread that angels came from heaven to help the masons, and continued their work during the night. In this rapidly erected building Cronaca displayed, if not all his genius, at least all his skill. The plans and methods employed to resist the strains in the framing of the great ceiling, which is of enormous weight, are justly admired and have often been studied by architects.

When the Medici returned and removed their residence from the palace which they had occupied on the Via Larga to the Palazzo della Signoria, Cosimo desired to change the council hall into an audience hall, and ordered the presumptuous Baccio Bandinelli, whose designs had captivated him, to make certain alterations. The sculptor, however, had overestimated his talent as an architect, and in spite of the assistance of Giuliano Baccio d'Agnolo, whom he called to his help, he worked for ten years without managing to get out of the difficulties which he had himself created. It was Vasari who raised the ceiling several feet, finished the